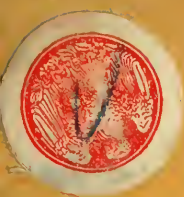


THE PLAYS OF
HENRY ARTHUR JONES



THE MASQUERADERS

A Play in Four Acts

BY

HENRY ARTHUR JONES

AUTHOR OF

"THE LIARS," "MICHAEL AND HIS LOST ANGEL," "THE TEMPTER,"
"THE CRUSADERS," "JUDAH," "THE CASE OF REBELLIOUS
SUSAN," "THE DANCING GIRL," "THE MIDDLEMAN,"
"THE ROGUE'S COMEDY," "THE TRIUMPH OF THE
PHILISTINES," "THE MASQUERADERS," "THE
MANŒUVRES OF JANE," "CARNAC SAHIB,"
"THE GOAL," "MRS. DANE'S DEFENCE,"
"THE LACKEY'S CARNIVAL," "THE
PRINCESS'S NOSE," ETC.

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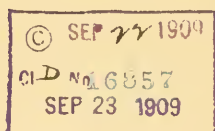
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1909

“I think we had better not tell this story in England, for no one would believe it.—I myself was close to the squadron, and distinctly saw what happened.”

LORD ROBERTS, *Forty-one Years in India.*



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1-10 m. deep, 11 m. 31 m. 20

May I gratefully recall our pleasant association during its production, and your striking performance of David Remon, by asking you to accept its dedication in its present form?

Gratefully yours,

HENRY ARTHUR JONES.

*Produced by Mr. George Alexander at the St. James's
Theatre on 28th April 1894.*

PERSONS REPRESENTED

DAVID REMON.

SIR BRICE SKENE.

MONTAGU LUSHINGTON.

EDDIE REMON.

THE EARL OF CRANDOVER, Master of the Crandover Hunt.

HON. PERCY BLANCHFLOWER.

SIR WINCHMORE WILLS, M.D.

GEORGE COPELAND.

FANCOURT.

CARTER.

RANDALL.

RODNEY.

SHARLAND.

JIMMY STOKES, an old huntsman.

BRINKLER, proprietor of "The Stag."

THOMSON.

DULCIE LARONDIE.

HELEN LARONDIE, her sister.

CHARLEY WISHANGER, afterwards Lady Shalford.

LADY CLARICE REINDEAN, Lord Crandover's daughter.

LADY CRANDOVER.

*Guests, Dancers, Fox-hunters, Hotel Servants, and
Waiters.*

ACT I

SCENE—THE COURTYARD OF THE STAG HOTEL AND
ASSEMBLY ROOMS AT CRANDOVER.

(Four years pass.)

ACT II

SCENE—DRAWING-ROOM AT LADY SKENE'S.

(Nine months pass.)

ACT III

SCENE—PRIVATE SITTING-ROOM AT THE HOTEL PRINCE
DE GALLES, NICE.

ACT IV.

SCENE—THE OBSERVATORY ON MONT GARIDELLI,
MARITIME ALPS, NEAR NICE.

*The following is a copy of the original play-bill of
"The Masqueraders."*

ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.

Sole Lessee and Manager . . . Mr. GEORGE ALEXANDER.

To-night, Saturday, 28th April, 1894, and every
evening at eight o'clock,

A new and original modern Play, in four Acts,

By HENRY ARTHUR JONES,

entitled

THE MASQUERADERS.

DAVID REMON	Mr. George Alexander.
SIR BRICE SKENE	Mr. Herbert Waring.
MONTAGU LUSHINGTON . . .	Mr. Elliot.
EDDIE REMON	Mr. H. V. Esmond.
LORD CRANDOVER (Master of the Crandover Hunt). .	Mr. Ian Robertson.
HON. PERCY BLANCHFLOWER	Mr. A. Vane-Tempest.
SIR WINCHMORE WILLS, M.D.	Mr. Graeme Goring.
GEORGE COPELAND.	Mr. Ben Webster.
FANCOURT.	Mr. Arthur Royston.
CARTER	Mr. Guy Lane-Coulson.
RANDALL	Mr. J. A. Bentham.
RODNEY.	Mr. F. Kinsey Peile.
SHARLAND	Mr. A. Bromley-Davenport.
JIMMY STOKES (an old whip).	Mr. William H. Day.
BRINKLER (proprietor of "The Stag")	Mr. Alfred Holles.
THOMSON	Mr. F. Loftus.
A Servant.	Mr. Theo Stewart.

DULCIE LARONDIE Mrs. Patrick Campbell.

HELEN LARONDIE (her sister) Miss Granville.

CHARLEY WISHANGER (after-

wards Lady Shalford). . . Miss Irene Vanbrugh.

LADY CLARICE REINDEAN

(Lord Crandover's daughter). Miss Beryl Faber.

LADY CRANDOVER Mrs. Edward Saker.

Guests, Dancers, Fox-hunters, Hotel Servants, and Waiters.

THE PRESENT DAY.

ACT I.

SCENE—THE STAG HOTEL AND ASSEMBLY ROOMS AT
CRANDOVER.

(Four years pass.)

ACT II.

SCENE—DRAWING-ROOM AT LADY SKENE'S

(Nine months pass.)

ACT III.

SCENE—PRIVATE SITTING-ROOM AT THE HOTEL
PRINCE DE GALLES, NICE.

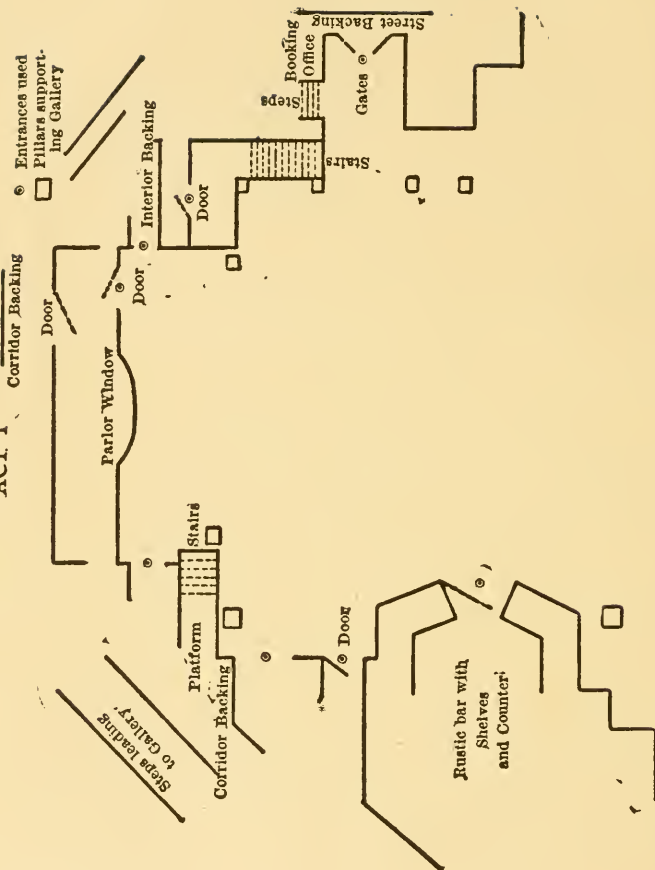
ACT IV.

SCENE—THE OBSERVATORY ON MONT GARIDELLI,
MARITIME ALPS, NEAR NICE.

THE MASQUERADERS

SCENE GROUND PLAN

ACT I



THE MASQUERADERS

ACT I

SCENE:—*The old courtyard of the Stag Hotel and Assembly Rooms at Crandover, roofed in to form a hall.*

Along right is a bar-counter, surmounted by a glass casement and windows, which open and shut down on to the counter. In the middle of the counter is a lid, which lifts up and forms doorway. At the back are steps leading to the Crandover Assembly Rooms. On the left the large old-fashioned gateway of the Inn. Running all round are the old galleries remaining from coaching times. Plants and banners hung about the hall. On the outside of bar is hung a subscription list, in which the words "Widow and Orphans" and "Dick Ramsden" are discernible. Dancing in the rooms beyond. Amongst the company are LORD CRANDOVER, LADY CRANDOVER, LADY CLARICE REINDEAN, CHARLEY WISHANGER. MONTAGU LUSHINGTON, a modern young man, is coming downstairs.¹

LORD CRANDOVER

[*A jovial English aristocrat of about fifty speaks to BRINKLER.*] Devilish rum start this of Miss Larondie's, Brinkler.

BRIN.

[*With a grin.*] Yes, my lord.

*General call.
Lord Cran.,
Lady Cran.,
Clarice, Monty,
Charlie,
Fancourt,
Sharland,
Rodney,
Randall,
Brinkler, Sir
Brice and
guests.*

¹ *When curtain rises Montagu and Charley are seated on stairs L. Fancourt and Sharland standing by barrel, four men are playing cards in further room. Brinkler is with them. He comes out, and goes down R. Lord and Lady Crandover enter from ball-room and go C., followed by Rodney and Lady Clarice, who are followed by Randall. Orchestra at back begins playing a polka just before rise of curtain.*

² Montagu and Charley move down L. C. ; Rodney goes up R. and joins Randall.

LORD CRAN.

Where is she?

BRIN.

[*Pointing off into the bar, L.*] In the bar there.
[*They all look off, and show great interest.* MON-
TAGU LUSHINGTON *joins the group.*¹]

CHAR.

[*A very fast, mannish little woman, to MONTAGU.*]
Not bad, eh?

MON.

Exquisite. That divine poise of the arm as she draws the handle of the beer machine is really quite priceless.

LORD CRAN.

Does she bring you much business, Brinkler?

BRIN.

Well, she's brought me two good customers, my lord.

LORD CRAN.

Who are they?

BRIN.

One of them is Sir Brice Skene, my lord.

[LADY CRANDOVER *exchanges a look with* LADY CLARICE.]

LADY CRAN.

Is Sir Brice often here?²

[LADY CLARICE *is showing interest.*]

BRIN.

He's almost lived here lately, my lady.

LADY CLAR.

[*To LADY CRANDOVER, aside, bitterly.*] What did I tell you?

LORD CRAN.

Who's the other customer?

³ Guests from ball-room come on in couples and disperse R. and L.

BRIN.

That mad gentleman that lives at Gerard's Heath,
Mr. Remon. There he is in the bar now.

[*They all look off, and show great interest.*]

MON.

That pale individual who is dallying with claret in
the corner?

BRIN.

Yes; that's sixty-nine Mouton Rothschild. I get it
specially for him. Fancy drinking Mouton Roths-
child!

CHAR.

The man's looking at us.

[*SIR BRICE enters from ball-room, comes down gradu-
ally to group.*]

LORD CRAN.

He's an astronomer, isn't he?

BRIN.*

I believe he is something in that line, my lord. And
he's got a little brother who is likewise touched.

MON.

With the stars, or the barmaid?

BRIN.

Miss Larondie isn't exactly a barmaid, is she, my
lord?

LORD CRAN.

No; her mother was distantly related to the Skenes.
Her father came of a good old French family.² *

LADY CRAN.

The girl might have done well for herself. We used
to receive her family at the Court and when her
father died I interested myself to get her a situation
as a governess in a Christian family. But she be-
haved very badly.

* *Music ceases.*

* *Call. Eddie
—Copeland—
Dulcie (key),
David (can-
dle and ring),
warn band.*

² *Lord Cran.
moves up l. c.*

MON.

When one is a governess in a Christian family, one is compelled to behave badly for the sake of the higher morality.

LADY CRAN.

Miss Larondie has thoroughly lost caste. And I should take it as a great favour if Mr. Brinkler would see that she has no chance of—of misconducting herself with——¹

¹ *Lady Cran. moves L. C. The four card players enter and join guests.*

[SIR BRICE *has come up, and* LADY CRANDOVER *stops embarrassed when she sees him.*]

SIR BRICE.

With whom? Is Miss Larondie about to misconduct herself, Brinkler?

BRIN.

No, Sir Brice, I trust not.

SIR BRICE.

[*To* LADY CRANDOVER.] Have you any reason for supposing that Miss Larondie is about to misconduct herself, Lady Crandover?

LADY CRAN.

[*Embarrassed.*] I—I am surprised, Sir Brice——

SIR BRICE.

Have you any reason for supposing that Miss Larondie is about to misconduct herself?

LADY CRAN.

No.

SIR BRICE.

[*Politely.*] Thank you.

[*Goes off into the bar. In crossing the bar he has to pass* LADY CLARICE, *he bows to her with extreme politeness, she bites her lips, and returns his bow. Exit* SIR BRICE *into bar.*]

LADY CLAR.

[*To her mother, aside.*] Oh, I can't bear it!¹

LADY CRAN.

Hush!

LADY CLAR.

He has gone to that girl.

[*The next dance begins. The stage gradually clears.*]

CHAR.²

Our dance, Monty.

MON.

[*Giving arm.*] So your vestal self is dedicate to matrimony and Sir Digby Shalford?

CHAR.

Yes; he's a trifle washed out; but we are frightfully hard up, and you didn't ask me.

MON.

My dear Charley, marriage is the last insult one offers to a woman whom one respects. Love if you please——

CHAR.

Thanks. We'll think about it. By the way, you'll stand a chance with Clarice now Sir Brice has cut her. Her connections would be useful to you.³

MON.

What would Crandover settle on her?

CHAR.

Not much. Clarice would tell me. I'll ask her. What would you do it for? A thousand a year?

MON.

[*Reproachfully.*] My dear Charley, don't hurt my self-respect. [*They go into the ball-room.*]⁴

[*Enter EDDIE REMON, a delicate boy of about twenty, highly refined, overstrung, unbalanced. He is followed by GEORGE COPELAND, a bearded, athletic man about forty.*]

¹ Music in ball-room begins—general exit begins. Brinkler follows Sir Brice off; ladies and gentlemen claim partners and move off r. Rodney exit with Lady Clarice, Randall with Lady Cran., Lord Cran. exit with the others.

² Goes c.

³ Fan. and Shar. follow the others off.

⁴ Bell rings L. An ostler comes down steps L. and opens gate. When Eddie and Copeland have passed through he shuts gate and exit up steps. Eddie runs across to stairs R. Copeland follows.

COP.

But what's he doing here?

EDDIE.

Sun-gazing.

COP.

Sun-gazing?

EDDIE.

Yes. Look! Here's his sun. She's dragging him through space, and where the devil they're going to, I don't know.

[Enter DULCIE LARONDIE from bar.¹]

DUL.

[*Speaking off into the outer bar. She has a large key in her hand.*] I've forgotten the candle. Sir Brice, would you mind bringing me that candle?

[DAVID REMON enters from bar, with the lighted candle in his hand. He is a man of about forty, pale, studious, philosophic-looking. SIR BRICE follows quickly, and the two men stand facing each other.]

SIR BRICE.

Give me that candle.

DAVID.

Miss Larondie— [Appealing to DULCIE.]

DUL.

[*Stands coquettishly looking at both of them.*] That one shall light me to the cellar who makes himself the most ridiculous over it.

DAVID.

[*Coming towards her.*] That will be myself.

SIR BRICE.

Give me that candle.

DUL.

Sir Brice, Mr. Remon will make himself far more ridiculous than you.*

¹ Dulcie goes up c., stands for a moment looking off r. Eddie and Copeland stand aside up r.

* Music ceases.

SIR BRICE.

Then let him light you.

[Exit into bar. REMON is carrying the candle perfectly straight in his hands. DULCIE turns to him.]

DUL.

You're carrying that candle on one side; you're dropping the grease. [He looks at her, holds it much on one side, and drops the grease.] That's better. [She stands a moment or two looking him up and down with comic inspection.] Yes, I think that will do. You look very well. Would you mind waiting here till I come back? *

* Warn band.

[Gravely blows out the candle, and exit L. DAVID stands there. Pause. COPELAND comes behind him, claps him on the shoulder.]

COP.

Davy!

DAVID.

[Turns round, cordially.] My dear fellow! [Very warm hand-shaking.] You're coming to stay? ¹

COP.

No, to say good-bye. I catch the night mail back, and to-morrow I'm off to Alaska. I'm sick of this nineteenth-century civilisation. I must do a bit of climbing, and get myself re-oxidised.

DAVID.

What is it this time?

COP.

Mount Saint Elias, 18,000 feet high, and snow at the sea-level.

EDDIE.

Davy, your bottle of claret is here in the bar.

DAVID.

But Miss Larondie has not come back from the cellar.

¹ David moves down L. C., and puts candle on table. Copeland follows and stands C. Eddie looks after Dulcie, then goes to bar.

EDDIE.

* *Music begins.*

She came up the other stairs. She's in the bar talking to Sir Brice Skene.* [*The band strikes up a very bright dance-tune. EDDIE puts his fingers in his ears.*] Oh! oh! oh! Those wretched musicians!

COP.

What's the matter?

EDDIE.

They are playing horribly in tune, as if the world were full of harmony. I must get a tin kettle and put them out.

¹ *Copeland goes L.*

[*DAVID goes up to the bar, shows intense mortification, conquers it. Exit EDDIE into ball-room. DAVID calls "BRINKLER."*¹]

BRINKLER enters with a bottle and glasses.

DAVID.

Brinkler, my claret here.

[*BRINKLER brings bottle in cradle and two glasses, puts them down on the other side of stage.*]

BRIN.

Mouton Rothschild, sixty-nine.

² *David goes c. Brinkler begins to pour out the wine very carefully. David sits L. C.*

DAVID.²

So I'm mad to drink the finest vintages, eh Brinkler? [*BRINKLER looks surprised.*] I heard you say so.

BRIN.

Well, it is unusual, sir.

DAVID.

You're right. A man must be mad who drinks the rarest wines when he can get salted beer and doctored gin. Still, you must humour me, Brinkler. [*BRINKLER seems puzzled.*] Though what's the good of climbing Mount Elias, I don't know. [*Turning to COPELAND.*]

³ *Copeland sits L.*

COP.

To get the top of it.³

DAVID.

But what's the good of getting to the top of it?

COP.

What's the good of getting to the top of anything? You've spent the last dozen years of your life and nearly blinded yourself to solve the mystery of sun-spots.

DAVID.

But sun-spots are practical.

COP.

Practical?

DAVID.

Who solves the mystery of sun-spots may show the way to control the future harvests of the world; and who controls the harvests of the world will provide cheaper swipes and smaller beer for Brinkler's grandchildren, eh, Brinkler?

BRIN.

[*Comes forward.*] Sir?

DAVID.

I was saying that the elect of the earth, and by the elect of the earth I mean every man who has a vote, may get cheaper swipes when I have solved my problem of sun-spots.

BRIN.

Sir?

DAVID.

Your grandchildren shall be amply provided for, Brinkler. [*Turns to COPELAND.*] Drink. [*Exit BRINKLER puzzled.*] A prosperous voyage and a safe return, old fellow. [*Drinks.*] I've drunk to your folly, now drink to mine.

COP.

Tell me all about it, Davy. It is folly, then?

DAVID.

No, if folly is happiness, folly is the greatest wisdom.

COP.

You are happy, then?

DAVID.

[*Nods.*] Yes. And wretched, beyond all telling.

COP.

Why?

DAVID.

I shall never win her. She'll never be mine, George. And if she were,—that might be the saddest thing of all.

COP.

How?

DAVID.

When the desired one becomes the possessed one, her beauty fades. I love her, George, and I want to keep on loving her. [*COPELAND laughs.*] Laugh at me! I laugh at myself. I was forty-two last August. You know pretty much what my life has been. Drink one glass, old boy, to the days when we were twenty-five, and to our old loves.

COP.

[*Drinks.*] Our old loves. Your last one, Davy?

DAVID.

Ah! She soured me, but she didn't break my heart. And she drove me to my sun-spots. So God bless her! God bless them all! Whatever I've been in practice, George, in theory I've always had the most perfect loyalty to womankind of any man that ever breathed. [*COPELAND laughs.*] Don't laugh, you rascal! I meant it! I've always kept my reverence for them, and I've always known that some day or the other I should meet one who would make me worship her with the purest devotion a man can feel for a woman.

COP.

And you have met her?

DAVID.

[*Nods, looking towards bar.*] She's in there, flirting with the choicest blackguard in England.

COP.

You poor dear fool! You always would pay half-a-crown for anything you could get for twopence.

DAVID.

Yes, but I always knew what a fool I was. Do you think I don't know what a fool I am now? George, it's not any empress, not any goddess, but just that girl in the bar there that owns me body and soul.¹

* *Rising and going L. C.*

COP.

Pack up your traps and come to Alaska and forget her.

DAVID.

[*Hand on his heart.*] She's packed herself here, and here she'll lie snug and warm till all grows cold.*
[*Looking over to bar.*] And that blackguard is talking to her!

¹ *Music ceases.*

COP.

Who is he?

DAVID.

Sir Brice Skene.²

² *Moves down R.*

COP.

The racing man?

DAVID.

Yes. He's rich. George, if he——

COP.

If he—what?

DAVID.

He shook hands with her last night.³ When his finger-tips touched hers, I felt I could kill him, George. And if he—if he—No, I wrong her! She's a good woman. And yet, damn him, he has twenty thousand a year——

³ *Returns c. Warn band.*

COP.

Is it a 'question of money?

DAVID.

¹ *Taking up wine.*What do you mean? ¹

COP.

I've not a single near relation in the world. My father left me, I suppose, from two to three hundred thousand pounds. [*Holds out hand.*] Davy, say the word——

DAVID.

No, George.

COP.

Why should you hesitate?

DAVID.

I don't want it. I've just enough for my wants. I've only Eddie to provide for. And I've only one extravagance. [*Tapping the bottle.*] I love good wine, and plenty—not too much—of it.

COP.

But if you were rich—perhaps she—

DAVID.

² *David goes R*Thanks, George; I won't buy her. ²

COP.

You're welcome.

DAVID.

I know it.

COP.

By Jove, I've only just time to catch the mail. Good-bye, Davy. [*They stand hand in hand for some moments.*³] I've left a couple of thousand at Coutt's in your name.

DAVID.

I shan't use it.

COP.

As you please.

³ *Cop. rises and goes R. C. The ostler comes down steps and waits by gate. Music begins.*

DAVID.

How long shall you be away?

COP.

I shan't come back till I've stood on Mount Saint Elias. Can I do anything for you? ¹

DAVID.

Yes. Tell me the quality of the moonshine on the top.

COP.

The same quality as your moonshine here, and just as real.

DAVID.

Is anything real? [*Looking at the fox-hunters and dancers.*] I've lived so long alone with only Eddie that the world has grown quite spectral to me.² Look at these phantoms! [*Pointing to the fox-hunters and dancers.*] Is anything real, George?

COP.

Yes; that two thousand at Coutts'.

DAVID.

And friendship. Friendship is real, isn't it? [*Shaking hands.*] God bless you, George. I'll come to the station with you.

(*As he is going off* DULCIE enters from bar, SIR BRICE SKENE following her.)

DAVID.

[*Sees her.*] No! [*Shakes hands.*] Don't break your neck over Mount Saint Elias!

COP.

Don't break your heart over a woman!

DAVID.

Yes, I shall. After all I'm only playing at life, and so I'll break my heart over her—in play.

COP.

Stick to your sun-spots!

[*Exit.*³]

¹ *Dulcie and Sir Brice appear in bar; she is wiping glasses.*

² *Moves up c.*

³ *L. Ostler closes gate and goes up steps.*

SIR BRICE.

[*Catching sight of the subscriptilon list.*] What a confounded lot of widows and orphans there are in the world!

DAVID.

¹ L. of L.C. table.

[*Sitting on the other side.*¹] Miss Larondie is an orphan.

DUL.

Yes, or I shouldn't be here. I wonder why all we superfluous women were sent into the world!

SIR BRICE.

[*Leaning on the bar.*] You are not superfluous. You are indispensable.

DUL.

To whom?

SIR BRICE.

To me.

DUL.

² Dulcie moves c.

[*Makes a profound mock curtsy.*] You do me proud. [*Calls to DAVID.*²] Mr. Remon, can you tell me why I was sent into the world?

DAVID.

To be indispensable to Sir Brice Skene.

SIR BRICE.

[*Aside to DULCIE.*] Why do you talk to that fellow?

DUL.

[*Aside to SIR BRICE.*] Oh, he amuses me. I can make such a fool of him, and—I'm so sick of this.

SIR BRICE.

I'll send you my new mare on Friday. Come to the meet.

DUL.

I daren't. What would everybody say?

SIR BRICE.

What does it matter? I'll send you the mare.

DUL.

No. They'd all cut me. Would your sister chaperon me? You know she wouldn't.

SIR BRICE.

My dear—you've made an awful mistake.

DUL.

Don't call me your dear.¹ I won't have it.

SIR BRICE.

[*With a little laugh.*] My dear, you've made an awful mistake, and there's only one way out of it.

DUL.

I don't wish to get out of it. Let them laugh at me, and cut me. I can bear it.

SIR BRICE.

Don't be a fool. If I were to offer you——[*In a low voice.*]

DUL.

[*Stops him.*] No. Pray don't. I shan't take it.

SIR BRICE.

[*Bending nearer to her.*²] But if I were to offer you——

DAVID.

[*To SIR BRICE.*] Will you give me those matches, please?

SIR BRICE.

Take them.³

[*Enter JIMMY STOKES, an old huntsman in an old hunting suit.*]

DUL.

Oh, Jimmy Jimmy Stokes, I'm so glad to see you! How are you, Jimmy Jimmy Stokes?

JIMMY.

[*Beaming old fellow of about seventy.*] Oh, I'm just tol-lol, miss, for a hold 'un. How's yourself, miss?

¹ *Dulcie crosses down R.*

² *David rises and crosses to C.*

³ *Sir Brice goes up C. David takes matches, walks back to table and seats himself at it; lights a candle and reads. Bell ring L. Ostler enters, opens gate. Jimmy Stokes enters, shakes hands with Ostler, crosses C. and shakes hand with Dulcie.*

DUL.

Oh, this isn't myself, Jimmy. Myself's dead and buried, and when I come back to life I shall find this queer creature has been playing all sorts of mad pranks in my absence. Sit down, Jimmy Jimmy Stokes, and put a name on it.

JIMMY.

Well, just a little wee drop of gin, miss, if I ain't intruding.

DUL.

Intruding, Jimmy? You ought to be welcome at any meet of the Crandover.¹

JIMMY.

Head whip five-and-thirty years, I was. And thinks I, I'll look in to-night. So I washes myself up, putts on my old whip's coat, and here I be as bold as brass. You see, miss, I be a privileged party, I be. Thank you, miss—Woa, woa, miss—woa!²

[SIR BRICE and DAVID have been sitting at table, looking at each other.]

SIR BRICE.

You spoke?

DAVID.

No. [*The look is continued for some moments.**]

SIR BRICE.

[*Folds his arms over the table, leans over them to* DAVID.] What the devil do you mean?

DAVID.

[*Folds his arms over the table so that they meet* SIR BRICE's, *leans over them so that the two men's faces almost touch.*] I mean to kill you if you dishonour her.

SIR BRICE.

You'll kill me?

DAVID.

I'll kill you.

¹ *Sir Brice comes and sits L. C. Dulcie goes to bar and pours out gin.*

² *Dulcie is adding water.*

* *Call--Fan, Shar., Rod., Ran., Carter.*

SIR BRICE.

I'll have her one way or the other.

DAVID.

You're warned.

[SIR BRICE rises, goes towards DULCIE, is about to speak to her. DAVID turns round and looks at him.

SIR BRICE stops, calls out to DULCIE, who is talking over the bar to JIMMY STOKES.]

SIR BRICE.

Miss Larondie, I'll send you the mare on Friday.

[DULCIE shakes her head, SIR BRICE looks at DAVID and exit.]

JIMMY.

Well, here's luck to you, miss, and I wish I could see you going across the country with the C. H. as you used—that's all the harm I wish you, for you was a sweet, pretty figure on horseback, you was, and you rode straight, you and your father, wire and all—you rode straight.

DUL.

Don't remind me of old times, Jimmy.¹ [Turns to DAVID mischievously.] Mr. Remon, it's getting late. Isn't it time you were going? *

¹ Dulcie crosses to C.

* Call—Helen (hand-bag.)

DAVID.

[Rises.] Good-night.²

² David moves up L.

DUL.

Good-night. [As he is passing out to door she calls out to him again.] Mr. Remon——

DAVID.

[Stops.]

DUL.

I've something to say to you.

DAVID.

[Coming to her.] What is it?

DUL.

[*Tapping her forehead impatiently.*] It's gone!
Would you mind waiting there till I think what it is?

DAVID.

Certainly.

DUL.

That's so good of you. [*Looks him up and down a little while mischievously.*] Can I give you a book while you wait? Here's "Bradshaw," the "Turf Guide," this week's "Sporting Times."¹

¹ *Points to papers.
Music ceases.*

DAVID.

I shouldn't understand it. I'll look at you.

DUL.

Do you understand me?

DAVID.

Perfectly.

DUL.

I don't understand you.

DAVID.

You will some day.

[*The dance has finished, and a crowd of young men dancers, FANCOURT, CARTER, RANDALL, RODNEY, SHARLAND, come chattering and laughing to the bar, and shout for drinks together.*²]

FAN.

I say, Miss Larondie, I'm dying for a whisky and soda.

CAR.

Lemon squash.

RAN.

A baby bottle of jump.

ROD.

Brandy and soda.

FAN.

Don't serve him, Miss Larondie. He's three parts squiffy already.

ROD.

Shut up, Fan.

SHAR.

A gin cocktail, Miss Larondie, and I'll show you how to mix it.

FAN.

Don't trust him, miss. He wants to sneak a sample of your spirits for the public analyst.

ROD.

Serve me first, Miss Larondie, and I'll give you a guinea for Dick Ramsden's widow.

[General hubbub and clatter.]

DUL.

Order, order, gentlemen! Jimmy Stokes, take this gentleman's guinea and go round with this list, and see what you can get for poor Dick's family.

[JIMMY takes the subscription list, and is seen to go round with it to several of the bystanders, and talk to them in dumb show.¹]

FAN.

I'll go behind and help you, Miss.

[Lifts up the lid of the counter, and tries to push in.]

ROD.

[Pushing him back.] Sling, you animal! I'm going to be under-barmaid here.

[They both push in behind the bar.]

FAN.

No, you don't. Now, gents, your orders, and no larking with us poor unprotected females.

[Putting his arm round DULCIE's waist.]

[HELEN LARONDIE enters and stands watching]

DULCIE.]

DUL.

[Indignantly to FANCOURT.] How dare you?

ROD.

[On the other side, puts his arm round her waist—to FANCOURT.] How dare you?

¹ Bell rings L. Ostler opens gate. Jimmy, having been round group, sits R.

¹ Brinkler enters R.
Stands smiling at them.

DUL.

[Disengaging herself indignantly.] Pass out! Do you hear? Pass out! ¹ [Showing them the way out. Sees HELEN standing there, shows great shame.] Nell!

FAN.

[Seizes RODNEY by the collar and runs him out.] Pass out! Do you hear? Pass out!

[Runs him out of the bar.]

BRIN.

Gentlemen! Gentlemen! If you please! gentlemen! If you please!

DUL.

Mr. Brinkler, my sister has come for me. Would you mind waiting on these gentlemen?

[They clamour round BRINKLER, repeating their orders for drinks. DULCIE goes to her sister.]

DUL.

Nell!

[Kisses her.]

HELEN.

My dear.

DUL.

Come and talk to me. [Takes her up to where DAVID is standing. She catches sight of DAVID, who has been watching the scene with a mixture of bitterness and amusement. Seeing DAVID.] Mr. Remon—I had forgotten you.

DAVID.

² You had such pleasant companions.

² Comes down L.

DUL.

I have wasted your time.

DAVID.

It's of no value.

DUL.

But I'm afraid I've made you rather foolish.

DAVID.

In a world of fools it's a distinction to play the fool for you. In a world of shadows, what does it matter what part one plays? Good-night.¹

¹ Ostler opens gate.

DUL.

No, come again.

DAVID.

It's nearly closing time.

DUL.

But we shall be late to-night. Come again by and by.

DAVID.

By and by. [Exit.²]

² David exit through gate. Ostler goes up steps and off.

HELEN.

Who is that?

DUL.

His name's Remon. He has haunted the place for the last month. He's in love with me. I can make him do any foolish thing I please.* [BRINKLER serves the young men with drinks. The music strikes up again, and they gradually go off, leaving the stage with only DULCIE and HELEN on it.] Nell, I'm so glad—what makes you come so late?

* Warn band.

HELEN.

[A soft-voiced, gentle woman of about thirty, in a nurse's dress.] I've just had a telegram to go and nurse a typhoid case at Moorbrow, so I shan't see you for a few weeks. You still like it here?³

³ Sits L. c. right of Dulcie.

DUL.

[Rather defiantly]. Yes. It's livelier than being a governess, and it isn't so horrid as nursing typhoid.

HELEN.

[Smiling.] Dear, there's nothing horrid about nursing. It's just like a mother and her baby.

DUL.

How awful sweet *that* must be. [Looking at her sister.] How patiently you take our comedown,

Nell. Instead of rebelling and hating everybody as I do, you've just gone and nursed all these dirty people and made yourself quite happy over it.

HELEN.

I've found out the secret of living.

DUL.

What's that?

HELEN.

Forget yourself. Deny yourself. Renounce yourself. It's out of the fashion just now. But some day the world will hear that message again.

DUL.

¹ *Kneeling by her.*

[*Looking at HELEN with admiration.*¹] I wish I was good like you, Nell. No, I don't. I don't want to deny myself, or renounce myself, or forget myself. I want to enjoy myself, and to see life. That's why I screwed up my courage and answered Brinkler's advertisement, and came here.

HELEN.

* *Music begins.*

And are you enjoying yourself? *

DUL.

[*Defiantly*]. Yes, after a fashion. I wish I was a man, or one of those girls upstairs. Why should they have all the pleasure and happiness of life?

HELEN.

You're sure they have all the pleasure and happiness of life?

DUL.

At any rate they've got what I want. Oh, how I long for life! How I could enjoy it! Hark! [*Dance music swells.*] Isn't that dance maddening? I must dance! [*Begins.*] Oh, Nell, I was made for society! Oh, for London! for pleasure! To be somebody in the world! How I would worship any man who would raise me to a position! And wouldn't I repay him? What parties I'd give! I'd

have all London at my feet! I could do it! I know I could! Oh, is there anybody who will take me out of this dead-alive hole and give me the life I was made for? *

* General call.

[*Flings herself wildly round, half dancing, and drops her head into HELEN's lap sobbing.*]

HELEN.

[*Stroking DULCIE's hair very softly.*] My poor Dulcie! I knew you weren't happy here.

DUL.

I hate it! I hate it! Nell, don't be surprised if I do something desperate before long.

HELEN.

Dulcie, you'll do nothing wrong.

[*Lifting up DULCIE's head, looking keenly at her.*]

DUL.

What do you mean? Nell, you know I wouldn't. Kiss me, ducky. Say you know I wouldn't.

HELEN.

[*Kisses her.*] I don't think you would, but—when I came in and saw those two men——

DUL.

[*Quickly.*] Boys. They meant nothing. One has to put up with a good deal here. Men aren't nice creatures.¹

HELEN.

Dulcie, you must come away from this.

¹ Dulcie rises.

DUL.

Where? What can I do? I wish somebody would marry me. What wouldn't I give to cut Lady Clarice as she cut me to-night!

HELEN.

Did she cut you?

DUL.

Yes. She gave me one look—Nell, if she looks at

me again like that, I don't care what happens, I shall box her ears.¹

HELEN.

Dulcie!

DUL.

But if she cuts me, Sir Brice has cut her. And he pays me no end of attention.²

HELEN.

You're not growing friendly with Sir Brice?

DUL.

No—yes—he's always paying me compliments, and asking me to take presents.

HELEN.

You haven't taken his presents?

DUL.

No. Don't fear, Nell, I'll take nothing from him except—if he were really fond of me, I'd marry him, Nell.

HELEN.

No, dear, no. He's not a good man.

DUL.

Nell, there ain't any good men left in the world. The race is extinct. I daresay Sir Brice is as good as the rest, and if he were to ask me I should say "yes." [HELEN *shakes her head*.*] Yes, I should, Nell. And I should make him a good wife, Nell, for there are the makings of a good wife in me. I should say "yes," and oh, wouldn't I like to see Lady Clarice's face when she hears the news.

HELEN.

I hope he won't ask you, Dulcie.

DUL.

Stranger things have happened.

HELEN.

I must be going. I've to watch a fever case to-night.

¹ Goes R. C.

² Helen rises and joins Dulcie.

* Music ceases.

DUL.

[*Twining HELEN's arms round her neck.*] I wish I could have a fever.

HELEN.

Dulcie!

DUL.

It would be so lovely to be nursed by you. [*Hugging her.*] I shall never love a man as I love you, Nell. But I suppose that's a different kind of love. [*HELEN sighs.*] What makes you sigh?

HELEN.

Good-bye, Dulcie.

DUL.

Good-bye, you dear, nice, soft, warm, comforting thing. You're as good as a boa, or a muff, or a poultice to me.¹ I'll let you out this way. It's nearer for you.

[*Exeunt HELEN and DULCIE through bar.*]

[*SIR BRICE enters from ball-room, followed by LADY CRANDOVER, LADY CLARICE following. LADY CLARICE goes and sits down quite apart.*]

LADY CRAN.

Sir Brice!²[*SIR BRICE turns, stops.*]

LADY CRAN.

[*Somewhat embarrassed.*] Do you know what people are saying of you?

SIR BRICE.

I haven't an idea. But whatever it is, don't stop them.

LADY CRAN.

Sir Brice. All through the season you have paid the most marked attention to Clarice.

SIR BRICE.

I admire Lady Clarice immensely. I have a very in-

¹ *Laugh off.*

² *Lady Cran. going down c. Sir Brice going down L. C. Guests follows slowly on and move down R. and L. A lady and gentleman enter from up R., on gallery, and go L. C.*

genuous nature, and perhaps I allowed it to become too apparent.

LADY CRAN.

You allowed it to become so apparent that every one in the county supposed as an honourable man—

SIR BRICE.

Ah, that's a nice point, isn't it? If Crandover thinks I have behaved dishonourably, the Englishman's three remedies are open to him—he can write a letter to the "Times," or he can bring an action, or—he can horsewhip me. Personally, I'm indifferent which course he takes. Excuse me.

[*Goes off into the bar.*]

LADY CRAN.

[*Enraged and almost in tears, goes to CLARICE.*]
My dear, he's a brute! What an awful life his wife will have! ¹

¹ *Goes L. with Clarice.*

LADY CLAR.

Then why did you run after him? Why did you let me encourage him?

LADY CRAN.

Clarice, he has twenty thousand a year.

LADY CLAR.

But everybody says he'll run through it in a few years. He lost fifty thousand on the Leger alone.

LADY CRAN.

I know. Oh yes, he'll soon get through it. Well, now you've lost him, it's a great comfort to think what a perfect brute he is. You've had a lucky escape.

¹ *Laugh off R., Jimmy Stokes is run on c. by Fan., Shar., Rod. and Ran. Jimmy has the list and is seen expostulating with them. Mon., Char. and Lord C. follow.*

DULCIE *re-enters from bar.* JIMMY *re-enters with subscription list.*¹

LADY CLAR.

[*Watching DULCIE.*] Yes, but I don't like being thrown aside for that miss there.

DUL.

What luck, Jimmy?

JIMMY.

[Shakes his head.]

DUL.

[Takes the subscription list from him.] Oh, Jimmy Jimmy Stokes, when we keep a Punch and Judy show, I'll never send you round with the hat.¹

¹ Returns list to him.

JIMMY.

Ah, miss, we know how you could get a peck of money for 'em—don't we, Mr. Fancourt?

FAN.

By Jove, yes. Jimmy has made a splendid suggestion, Miss Larondie. The only question is, will you agree to it?

DUL.

What is it, Jimmy?

JIMMY.

You back me up, miss, that's all, will you?²

DUL.

Certainly. Anything to keep Mrs. Ramsden and her chickabiddies out of the workhouse.* I always feel, you know, Jimmy, that it was through me that Dick was killed.

² Three other guests enter from up R. on gollery and join people over bar.

* Call David.

FAN.

Through you, Miss Larondie?

DUL.

I was leading across Drubhill. I took the drop into the road. Dick was next behind. His horse stumbled and *[shudders]* they picked him up dead. *[All the young fellows have crowded round and listen.]*³

JIMMY.⁴

'Twas me as picked him up if you remember, miss, and took him home, I did, ah, it's three years ago

³ Charley comes down R.

⁴ During speech, all laugh or acquiesce as required.

last February, yes, and I broke the news to his wife, I did, and what's more, I helped to lay Dick out, I did, and I says to his wife, "Don't take on now, you foolish woman," I says, "why," I says, "it might have been *felo-de-se*." But it were a nasty drop jump, miss, a nasty drop jump.

DUL.

And if I hadn't taken it, perhaps Dick might have been alive now.

JIMMY.

Not he, not he. Dick'd have drunk himself to death before this. He was a royal soul, Dick was. And if you'll only back me up, we'll raise a little fortune for Mrs. Ramsden in no time.

DUL.

Very well, Jimmy. But what is this plan, eh, Mr. Fancourt?

FAN.

Tell her, Jimmy. You started it.¹

JIMMY.

Well, miss, seeing all these young gents here, it struck me as, human nature being what it is, and no getting over it, no offence I hope to anybody, but if you was to offer to sell one, mind you, only one, of your kisses to the highest bidder——

DUL.

[*Indigantly.*] What?

MON.

A very excellent and original suggestion!²

DUL.

The idea! What nonsense!

FAN.

Nonsense? I call it a jolly good idea.

SHAR.

Splendid! By Jove, we'll carry it out too.

¹ Rod. and Fan. urge Jimmy on.

² Mon. has come down to R. of Dulcie. Three guests leave the courtyard and go into gallery L. Following them appears a housemaid L.; and a little later the ostler and two parlour maids enter on gallery from R.

DUL.

Indeed we won't. Jimmy, give me that list.
[*Takes the subscription list from JIMMY.*] Mr.
Fancourt will give me something, I'm sure.

FAN.

I should be delighted, but [*nudging SHARLAND*]
fact is, I've promised Sharland I wouldn't give any-
thing except on the conditions Jimmy Stokes has just
laid down.

DUL.

Mr. Sharland.

SHAR.

Very sorry, Miss Larondie, but fact is [*nudging*
FANCOURT] I've promised Fancourt I wouldn't give
anything except on the conditions Jimmy Stokes
has laid down.

[*DULCIE turns away indignantly, sees LADY CRAN-*
DOVER and LADY CLARICE, hesitates a moment, then
goes somewhat defiantly to them.]

DUL.

Lady Crandover, may I beg you for a small subscrip-
tion to Dick Ramsden's widow and children?

LADY CRAN.

[*Very coolly.*] I always leave such things to Lord
Crandover. [*Turns away.*]

DUL.

Perhaps Lady Clarice——

LADY CRAN.

I thought I heard some one propose a way in which
you could raise some money.

SIR BRICE.

[*Coming from bar.*] Raise some money? What's
the matter here?

FAN.

Jimmy Stokes has just proposed that Miss Larondie

should benefit the Dick Ramsden fund by selling a kiss by auction.

SIR BRICE.

What does Miss Larondie say?

DUL.

Impossible!

MON.

Not in the least. If you will allow me, gentlemen, I will constitute myself auctioneer. [*To DULCIE.*] I beg you will place yourself entirely in my hands, Miss Larondie.¹ Trust to my tact to bring this affair to a most successful issue. After all, it's not so indelicate as slumming.

DUL.

No, no!

MON.²

Allow me. A rostrum. Rodney, you are my clerk. That wine case. [*A wine case is brought forward from side.*²] And that barrel, if please. A hammer. [*A large mallet, such as is used for hammering bungs in beer barrels is given to him.*] Thank you [*He mounts.*] Ladies and gentlemen. [*Chorus of "Hear, hear."*³] We must all admit that the methods of raising the wind for all sorts of worthless persons and useless charities stand in need of entire revision. Fancy fairs, amateur theatricals, tableaux vivants, and such grotesque futilities have had their day. In the interests of those long-suffering persons who get up charity entertainments, and those yet more long-suffering persons who attend them, it is high time to inaugurate a new departure. [*Cries of "Hear, hear,"*] Ladies and gentlemen, there are three questions I take it which we ask ourselves when we raise a charitable subscription. Firstly, how shall we advertise ourselves, or amuse ourselves, as the case may be? Secondly, how far shall we be able to fleece our friends and the public? Thirdly, is the charity a deserving one?—The only really vital ques-

¹ *Lady Cran. rises—Carter moves a chair L. Lady Cran. sits. Clarice stands below her, Carter above.*

² *Rodney sits on barrel below Monty and prepares to record bids. When Monty asks for hammer, Randall, who has moved over to bar gets mallet, hands it to Jimmy, who passes it to Monty. Monty coughs with mock deference and everybody applauds. He then says "Ladies and gentlemen;" Jimmy shouts "Hear, hear!" He is quieted by Rodney—Monty proceeds.*

³ *During this speech all applaud, or laugh or agree as occasion demands.*

⁴ *Dulcie appeals to Monty and Jimmy in turn.*

tion of the three is "How shall we amuse ourselves in the sacred cause of charity?"

[*Cries of "Hear hear."*]

LADY CRAN.

Lushington, stop this nonsense before it goes any further! Do you hear?

MON.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am in your hands. Shall I go on?

[*Loud cries of "Yes, yes—Go on—Go on, Monty—Go on, Lushington."*]

LORD CRAN.

[*To LADY CLARICE.*] Now she'll disgrace herself.

SIR BRICE.

[*Having overheard.*] What did you say, Lady Crandover?

LADY CRAN.

Nothing, Sir Brice.

SIR BRICE.

I understood you to say that Miss Larondie would disgrace herself.

DUL.

[*With shame.*] Oh, Sir Brice, please let me go!¹

DAVID REMON enters. DULCIE going off comes face to face with him—stops.

SIR BRICE.

No, stay. Don't take any notice of what has been said.

DAVID.

What has been said?²

SIR BRICE.

What business is it of yours? Miss Larondie is a connection of my family. Go on, Lushington—Go on. We'll have this auction—it's in the cause of charity, isn't it? Go on!

¹ *Dulcie goes over to Sir Brice.*

² *Dulcie comes back to Jimmy, who after a while puts a stool in c. of stage, upon which Dulcie sits.*

DAVID.

[To MONTAGU.] What auction? What charity?

MON.

[*Soothingly.*] Gentlemen, gentlemen, we are taking this far too seriously. Pray be calm and allow me to to proceed. [*Cries of "Hear! Hear!—Go on, Monty!"*] In an age when, as all good moralists lament, love is so often brought into the market, the marriage market—and other markets—and is sold to the highest bidder, it would, I am convinced, require a far more alarming outrage on propriety than that which we are now about to commit, to cause the now obsolete and unfashionable blush of shame to mount into the now obsolete and unfashionable cheek of modesty. Gentlemen, without further ado I offer for your competition—one kiss from Miss Larondie. [*Movement on the part of DAVID. SIR BRICE and he stand confronting each other.*] One kiss from Miss Larondie. What shall I say, gentlemen?

FAN.

A sovereign.

MON.

A sovereign is offered. I will on my own account advance ten shillings. Thirty shillings is offered, gentlemen.

SHAR.

Thirty-five shillings

MON.

I cannot take an advance of less than ten shillings on this lot. Shall I say two pounds?

[SHARLAND *nods.*]

SIR BRICE.

A fiver.

[DAVID *steps forward towards* SIR BRICE.]

MON.

Thank you. A fiver. You are trifling, gentlemen.

FAN.

Six.

MON.

Six guineas—guineas only. Six guineas is offered. Gentlemen, if you do not bid up, in justice to my client I must withdraw the lot.

SHAR.

Seven.

SIR BRICE.

Ten.

MON.

Ten guineas. Gentlemen, only ten guineas—only ten guineas for this rare and genuine, this highly desirable——

DAVID.

Twenty guineas.

MON.

Twenty guineas. Thank you, sir. This gentleman. sees the quality of the article I am submitting——

SIR BRICE.

Thirty.¹

MON.

Thirty guineas. Gentlemen, is the age of chivalry dead? Mr. Fancourt, you are credited with some small amount of prowess among helpless ladies——

SHAR.

Cut in, Fan.

FAN.

Thirty-one.

MON.

Cannot take advances of less than five guineas. Thirty-five guineas. Gentlemen, will you force me to expatiate further on this exquisite——

DAVID.

Forty.

SIR BRICE.

Fifty.

¹ Advancing
to c.

[DAVID and SIR BRICE are getting nearer to each other.]

LORD CRAN.

Lushington, this is enough. This is getting beyond a joke

MON.

Then it's the only thing in life that ever did, so we'll continue.¹ Bid up, gentlemen, bid up. I am assured, gentlemen, by my client, the vendor, that on no account will this lot ever be duplicated. I am therefore offering you a unique opportunity of purchasing what I will venture to describe as the most——

DAVID.

Sixty.

SIR BRICE.

Seventy.

LORD CRAN.

Enough—enough! Stop this jest.

MON.

Jest? I presume you are in earnest, gentlemen, about the purchase of this lot?

DAVID.

I am.

SIR BRICE.

Go on, go on.

MON.

Seventy guineas, seventy guineas. Gentlemen, you have not all done? Mr. Fancourt, faint heart——

SHAR.

Have another shy, Fan.

FAN.

Seventy-five.

MON.

Seventy-five. Going at seventy-five guineas—the only chance; going at seventy-five guineas.

¹ General laugh.

FAN.

I say, Bricey, don't let me in.

SIR BRICE.

Eighty. *[Looking at DAVID.]*

DAVID.

Ninety.

SIR BRICE.

A hundred. *[Getting close to DAVID.]*

DAVID.

Two hundred.

SIR BRICE.

Three hundred.

LORD CRAN.

Skene, come away, do you hear? Come away.
[Trying to drag SIR BRICE away.]

SIR BRICE.

Let me be. What's the last bidding, Lushington?

MON.

Three hundred guineas.

SIR BRICE.

Five.¹

DAVID.

'A thousand.

SIR BRICE.

Fifteen hundred.

DAVID.

Two thousand.

SIR BRICE.

Three, and *[growling]* be damned to you! *[Pause.]*
Knock it down. Lushington.**[Long pause. DAVID shows disappointment.]*

MON.

Three thousand guineas is offered, gentlemen.
[Pause.] No further bid? Going at three thousand.
Going, going. *[Knocks it down.]* Sir Brice, the lot
is yours at three thousand guineas.¹ *Dulcie rises
and stands
between
them.** *Warn band.
Call Eddie.*

SIR BRICE.

Brinkler, pens, ink, and paper and a stamp.
[Stepping towards barrel. DAVID comes to him.]
 You've no further business here.²

DAVID.

Yes, I think.

[Pens, ink, and paper are brought to SIR BRICE; he hastily dashes off the cheque, gives it to MONTAGU.]

MONTAGU.

Thank you. Miss Larondie, a cheque for three thousand guineas. You have secured an annuity for your protégées.

DULCIE.

[Refusing the cheque.] No.

SIR BRICE.

Miss Larondie. *[DAVID looks at him.]* It will perhaps save any further misconstruction if I tell these ladies and gentlemen that an hour ago I asked you to do me the honour to become my wife.

[General surprise.]

DULCIE.

Sir Brice——

SIR BRICE.

Will you do me the favour to take that cheque for your charity, and the further favour of becoming Lady Skene?

[MONTAGU offers the cheque. A pause. DULCIE looks round, looks at LADY CLARICE, takes the cheque.] *

DULCIE.

Thank you, Sir Brice. I shall be very proud.

[DAVID shows quiet despair. Goes to back. Half the guests crowd round SIR BRICE and DULCIE, congratulating. The others show surprise, interest, and amazement.]

² Brinkler turns to bar counter, gets writing things, then takes out pocket-book and gets stamp. Sir Brice sits at R. C. to write cheque—reads out:—“National Provincial Bank, Cran-dover, pay Montagu Lushington, Esq., three thousand guineas.” Brinkler affixes stamp. Sir B. rises and hands cheque to Monty, who has come down R.

* Music begins.

LADY CRAN.

[*In a very loud voice.*] My carriage at once.

LORD CRAN.

[*In a low voice to her.*] We'd better stay and make the best of it.

LADY CRAN.

No, my carriage. Come, Clarice.

[*Goes off. A good many of the guests follow her.*][*Exeunt LADY CLARICE and LORD CRANDOVER.*¹]

SIR BRICE.

[*To FANCOURT.*] The Crandovers have gone off in a huff. Bet you a tenner they'll dine with me before three months.

FAN.

Done!

SIR BRICE.

[*To DULCIE.*] If you will allow me, I will place you in my sister's care. She's in the ball-room.

DUL.

[*Looking at her dress.*] No, Sir Brice, not yet. I've one of my old evening dresses upstairs. May I put it on?

SIR BRICE.

Yes, if you like. I'll wait for you at the ball-room door.

DUL.

I won't be a moment.

[*Running off up stairs with great excitement and delight.*]

MON.

[*To SIR BRICE.*] Congratulate you heartily, Sir Brice. [Offering hand.]

SIR BRICE.

[*Taking it.*] Oh, I suppose it's all right.

¹ A general exit begins—people on gallery exit R. and L. those on stage go off into ball-room.

SHAR.

[To SIR BRICE.] Your wooing was charmingly fresh and original, Sir Brice.

SIR BRICE.

Think so? ¹

¹ Turns away and lights cigarette.

CHAR.

[To MONTY.] What on earth does he want to marry the girl for?

MON.

Somebody has bet him a guinea he wouldn't
[*Exeunt CHARLEY and MONTAGU into the ball-room.*]

FAN.

Bravo, Bricey, my boy! This'll make up to you for losing the Leger.

SIR BRICE.

Think so? I'll go and get a smoke outside
[*Exit at gates.*]

SHAR.

[To FANCOURT.] Just like Bricey to do a silly fool's trick like this.

FAN.

I pity the girl. Bricey will make a sweet thing in husbands.

SHAR.

By Jove, yes. Her life'll be a regular beno, and no mistake.

[*Exeunt* ² DAVID *is left alone sitting at back.* ³]

[*Enter EDDIE. DAVID drinks and laughs rather bitterly to himself.*]

EDDIE.

What's gone wrong, Davy?

DAVID.

Miss Larondie is going to marry Sir Brice Skene.

² L. through gate.

³ David rises, comes down to table L. C., puts out candle, cross to R. table, throws down pen, sits R. C.; tries to read but breaks down. Eddie enters from ball-room and goes to him.

EDDIE.

Oh, then the solar system is all out of joint! Poor old big brother!

DAVID.

I won't feel it, Eddie, I won't feel it.

EDDIE.

Yes, you will, Davy. Yes, you will. Why weren't you tumbled into Mars, or Jupiter, or Saturn, or into any world but this?

DAVID.

Why?

EDDIE.

This is the very worst world that ever spun round, for a man who has a heart. Look at all the heartless and stupid people; what a paradise this is for them!

DAVID.

I'll forget her and plunge into my work.¹ There are millions of new worlds to discover.

¹ *Rises and goes c.—Eddie sits R. on table.*

EDDIE.

Yes, but are they all like this? because if they are, what's the use of discovering millions more of them? Oh, Davy, isn't there one perfect world out of all the millions—just one—where everything goes right, and fiddles never play out of tune?

DAVID.

There isn't one, Eddie, not one of all the millions. They're all alike.²

² *Returns to him.*

EDDIE.

'And breaking hearts in all of them? Oh, let's pretend there's just one perfect star somewhere, shall we?

DAVID.

Oh, very well; let's pretend there's one in the nebula of Andromeda. It's a long way off, and it does no

¹ *Moves down L. and stands with back to audience—Music ceases.*

harm to pretend. Besides, it makes the imbroglio of the universe complete if there is one perfect world somewhere in it.¹

SIR BRICE *enters smoking, throws away his cigarette, looks at DAVID rather insolently, goes into the ball-room.*

² *Goes up R. C. Eddie stops him.*

DAVID.²

If he doesn't treat her well—what does it matter? It's all a farce, but if he doesn't treat her well, I feel, Eddie, I could put a murder into the farce, just for fun.³

³ *Moves down L. C. Eddie follows c.*

EDDIE.

Come home, Davy.*

* *Warn band—warn curtain.*

DAVID.

Let me be, my boy. It's only a pinprick. I shall get over it.

EDDIE.

I wish I could bear it for you, Davy.

DAVID.

That would only mean your heart breaking instead of mine.

EDDIE.

Don't you think I'd break my heart for you, Davy?

DUL.

⁴ *Up L.*
⁵ *David goes up c. Motion Eddie away.*

[*Her voice heard off.*⁴] Thanks! I can't wait! Sir Brice is waiting for me!⁵

EDDIE.

Poor old big brother! [Exit. L.]

[Enter DULCIE down the stairs in evening dress, excited, radiant.⁶]

⁶ *Dulcie crosses c. David remains L. C.*

DUL.

[*Seeing DAVID.*] I thought you'd gone. Did you hear? I'm to be Lady Skene. Do I look nice? *
[*Very excited.*] I beg your pardon—I don't know

* *Music begins.*

what I'm saying. [*Looks round.*] I wish there was a looking-glass here.¹ I wonder where Sir Brice is—I'm to be Lady Skene—won't you congratulate me?

¹ *Dulcie crosses*
L.

DAVID.

I hope you will be happy.

DUL.

No, congratulate me.

DAVID.

I hope you will be happy.

DUL.

Ah, you think I shan't be happy? Then I will, just to spite you!²

² *Dulcie crosses*
R.

DAVID.

Ah, do spite me and be happy.

DUL.

[*Fidgeting with her dress.*] I'm sure my dress isn't right. Wasn't that a jest about the kiss?

DAVID.

A great jest.

DUL.

You wouldn't have really given two thousand guineas for a kiss from me?

DAVID.

[*Nods.*] Why not? Sir Brice gave fifty thousand for the pleasure of losing the Leger.

DUL.

But he stood to win.

DAVID.

So did I.

DUL.

What?

DAVID.

The kiss.

DUL.

But you wouldn't really have given two thousand guineas for it?

DAVID.

[*Nods.*] I think highly of women. It's a pleasing delusion of mine. Don't disturb it.

DUL.

[*Looking at him, after a little pause.*] You are the strangest creature, but what a splendid friend you'd make! I'm keeping Sir Brice waiting. [*Turns round, sees that the lace on the skirt of her dress is hanging loose.*] Look at that lace! What can I do? [*Giving him a pin.*] Would you mind pinning that lace on my skirt?

DAVID.

[*Takes the pin, kneels, and pins the lace, unseen by DULCIE, kisses the skirt.*] Will that do?

DUL.

Thank you so much. Do I look nice?

[*He looks up at her imploringly, like a dumb creature; she glances swiftly round to see that they are alone, suddenly bends and kisses him; runs up the ball-room steps. A burst of dance-music.**]

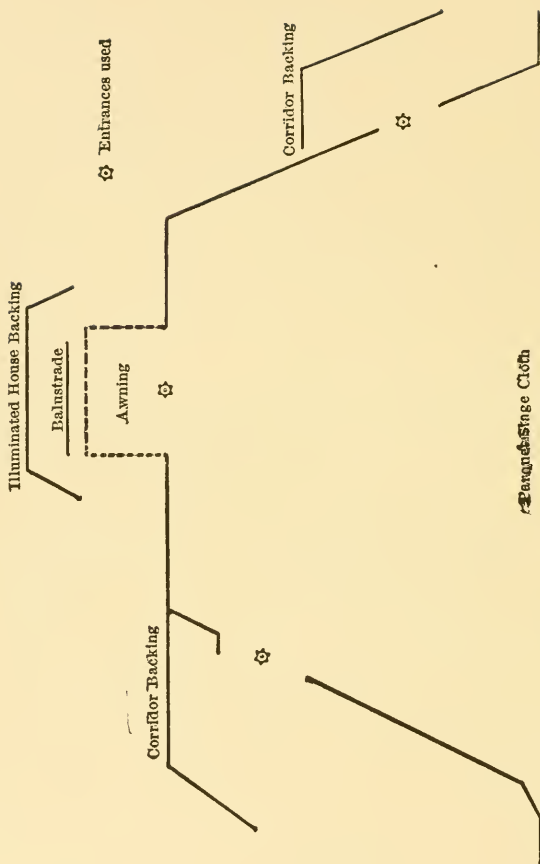
[*Three years and a half pass between Acts I. and II.*]

* Music ceases.

THE MASQUERADERS

SCENE GROUND PLAN

ACT II



ACT II.

SCENE.—*Reception-room at LADY SKENE'S. A great crowd in farther room. Discover LADY CRANDOVER, LADY CLARICE, CHARLEY WISHANGER [now LADY SHALFORD,] MONTAGU, FANCOURT, SHARLAND, and the young men of the first Act. Among the guests in farther room SIR WINCHMORE WILLS and the HON. PERCY BLANCHFLOWER.*

LADY CRAN.

It's astounding.

CHAR.

What is?

LADY CRAN.

The way every one runs after this woman. She's got everybody here again to-night.

LADY CLAR.

Professor Rawkinson and the Bishop of Malmesbury were fighting to get her an ice.

CHAR.

What is the secret of her popularity?

MON.

Why did you come here to-night?

CHAR.

I? Oh, I came because everybody else comes. Why did you?

MON.

Because everybody else comes. Do we ever have any

*General call.
Song with
piano accom-
paniment
heard off L.
When song
nearly fin-
ished, cur-
tain rises.
At end of
song all ap-
plaud; then
Lady Cran-
dover speaks.
Lady Cran-
dover and
others are
down c. :
guests up c.
and L.*

other reason for going anywhere, admiring anything, saying anything, or doing anything? The secret of getting a crowd to your room is, "*Entice a bell-wether.*" The flock will follow.

CHAR.

Who was bell-wether to Lady Skene?

MON.

The old Duchess of Norwich.

LADY CRAN.

I suppose the duchess knows all about Lady Skene's antecedents?

MON.

What does it matter about anybody's antecedents to-day?

LADY CRAN.

We must draw the line somewhere.

MON.

On the contrary, my dear Lady Crandover, we must *not* draw the line *anywhere*. We have yet got to learn what democracy means.

LADY CLAR.

What does democracy mean?

MON.

That there is no line to be drawn, either socially, morally, pecuniarily, politically, religiously, or anywhere.

LADY CLAR.

How horrid! ¹

MON.

[*Continuing.*] Who are the interesting people here to-night? Of course there's a crowd of respectable nonentities—But who are the attractions? Attraction number one: ² a financier's wife—the most charming woman in the world—gives the very best dinners

¹ Rises and moves up R.

² The lady mentioned enters from R. and joins other guests.

in London—had an extensive acquaintance amongst the officers at Aldershot fifteen years ago.

[THE HON. PERCY BLANCHFLOWER, *a fussy, buzzy, mincing, satirical little creature, with a finicking, feminine manner and gestures, has overheard, comes up to the group.*]

BLAN.¹

¹ R. of Monty.

What's this?—eh?—hum? No scandal, I trust?

MON.

No, Blanchflower;² no scandal—only the plain, unvarnished truth about all our friends.

² Moves L. C. and sits.

BLAN.

Ah, then I'll stay and listen.³ Go on!

³ Sits between Char. and Lady C.

MON.

Attraction number two: leading temperance and social purity orator⁴—can move an audience of ten thousand to tears—leads the loosest of lives—and is suspected of having poisoned his wife.

⁴ The gentleman indicated enters with a lady from L. They move slowly up stage and talk to others

BLAN.

But she had a fearful cockney accent. And he's very kind to his aged aunt and pretty niece—eh?—hum? Give him his due.

MON.

My dear Blanchflower, I'm not blaming the man for poisoning his wife. It may have been a necessity of his position; and if she had a cockney accent, it was a noble thing to do. Attraction number three:⁵ pretty little lady who has just emerged triumphantly from the Divorce Court, without a spot upon her pretty little character. Attraction number four——*
[LADY CLARICE rejoins the group.]

⁵ The lady alluded to enters from L., accompanied by a Bishop. They move up C.

* Warn band.

BLAN.

[*Interrupting.*] No! No! Skip number four! We know all about her. Attraction number five.

And mind, I shall thoroughly scold you all—when Lushington has got through his list.

MON.

¹ The gentleman described enters from L. accompanied by a lady. They move up L. C. slowly.

[*Proceeding.*] Attraction number five:¹ impressionist artist, novelist, and general dirty modern dabbler—is consummately clever—a consistent scoundrel in every relation of life—especially to women—a liar, a cheat, and drunkard—and a great personal friend of my own.

BLAN.

² Rises and goes R. C.

Oh, this is too shocking! This is really too shocking!²

LADY CLAR.

You've omitted the chief attraction to-night—our famous astronomer.

MON.

³ Standing back of sofa R.

Remon?³

BLAN.

* Music at back.

Of course. Since his great discovery we've only one astronomer in England.*

CHAR.

What was his great discovery?

BLAN.

Don't know. Some new spots on Venus, I believe.

MON.

No. That she wanted a new belt to hide the manners of her inhabitants, which were distinctly visible through his new large telescope, and if constantly observed would tend to the corruption of London society.⁴

⁴ Sir Winchmore comes down C.

BLAN.

You naughty person! You're not to look through that telescope!

MON.

My dear Blanchflower, I have; and I assure you we

have nothing to fear. But I tremble for the morals of Venus if they get a telescope as large as Remon's and begin to look at us.¹

BLAN.

Tell me, this friendship of the astronomer with Lady Skene—eh? hum?—quite innocent—eh?

MON.

I have never known any friendship between a man and a married woman that was not innocent. How can it be guilty, unless the woman is ugly?

LADY CLAR.

Poor dear Lady Skene is fearfully ill-used, I hear. [SIR WINCHMORE WILLS, a fashionable middle-aged physician, has come up and joined the group.] I've heard that Sir Brice gets drunk and—then—dreadful things happen.

BLAN.

But that can't be true—eh? hum?—Sir Winchmore—eh?

SIR WIN.

I have never treated Sir Brice for alcoholism, nor Lady Skene for bruises.

BLAN.

No, of course, no—but you've heard—hum? eh?

SIR WIN.

Singularly enough, I have never heard or seen anything in the least discreditable to any one of my patients. [EDDIE enters from L. and talks to guests.]

CHAR.

I know for a fact Sir Brice came a terrific cropper last week at Epsom, and doesn't know how he stands.

[EDDIE is listening attentively.]

BLAN.

And—hum—the astronomer—hum? eh? hum?—is there any truth—eh?

¹ Moves down L. Blanch. Comes to Monty.

² Charley goes c. with Sir W. and Fan-court.

¹ *Monty sits L. of Lady Cran. Eddie comes down L. and listens.*

MON.¹

Well, we *know* that our astronomer succeeded a few months ago to an immense fortune left him by a mountaineering friend in Canada. We *know* that Sir Brice neglects his wife and is practically ruined. We *know* that Lady Skene continues her parties, her household, her carriages, and we *know* that our astronomer pays [*Pause.*] the greatest attentions to Lady Skene.² Of course this doesn't absolutely prove Lady Skene's guilt³—yet why should we deprive ourselves of the pleasure of believing and circulating a spicy story about our friends merely because there is only the very slightest foundation for it?

² *Eddie moves away up L.*

³ *Monty rises and goes c.*

[*EDDIE rises rather indignantly and comes a little nearer to the group without being noticed by them.*]

BLAN.

Oh, this is very naughty of us. We are actually talking scandal about our hostess. We ought to be ashamed of ourselves!

LADY CRAN.

Really, it's time somebody made a stand, or society will be ruined. Here is a woman who was actually a barmaid at a public-house—her name is in everybody's mouth in connection with this astronomer, and yet——*

* *Music ceases. Call Dulcie. (Ring).*

MON.

And yet we crush to her receptions. At least you do, Lady Crandover.

LADY CRAN.

Oh, we are all to blame for lowering the moral tone of society as we are doing.

BLAN.

Oh, my dear Lady Crandover, please, please, please, do not make things unpleasant by dragging in morality. But where is the astronomer?—eh? hum? ⁴

⁴ *Eddie moves down L.*

EDDIE.

My brother will be coming by and by. I'll tell him he's wanted here.

[*Exit. BLANCHFLOWER looks aghast and stares round at all the rest, who show some slight discomfiture. FANCOURT and SHARLAND join the group.*]

BLAN.

Dear me! That's the astronomer's brother. Have we said anything?—hum? eh?

MON.

My dear Blanchflower, what does it matter what lies we tell about each other when none of our friends think any the worse of us if they are true!

BLAN.

Oh, but it's very wrong to tell lies, very wrong indeed. I've not seen Sir Brice to-night. Where is he? eh?

FAN.

Bricey doesn't generally stay very long at his wife's receptions.

SHAR.

Bricey's latest little hobby is teaching the girls at the Folly Theatre to box.¹

FAN.

Yes. Last Tuesday he was in great force at the Ducks and Drakes Club egging on Betty Vignette to fight Sylvia Vernon.

SHAR.

Oh, that's coming off—two hundred a side, on Sunday night week.

FAN.

[*Cautiously winking at SHARLAND, in a warning way.*] I say, old chap, keep it quiet. I wonder where Bricey is to-night.²

MON.

[What does it matter whether he is playing baccarat

¹ *Lady Clarice goes slowly up R. to door. Carter takes Lady Cran. up c.*

² *Fan. crosses front of sofa to c. Blan., Shar., Sir W. and others form a group behind sofa.*

with the pot-boy at the corner, or clandestinely taking his nurse-girl to the Alhambra on the pretence that it is a missionary meeting? We may be quite sure that Bricey is doing something equally vicious, stupid, disreputable, and—original.

CHAR.

[*To MONTY.*] Come here, you monster. Have you heard the news?

[*During the conversation of CHARLEY and MONTY the other group put their heads together and whisper.*]

MON.

What?

CHAR.

Sir Joseph is going to leave the Marchmoore estates to Clarice.

MON.

[*Glancing at LADY CLARICE.*] Sure?

CHAR.

Fact. The will is to be signed in a few days. Clarice told me so in confidence.

MON.

Thanks.

[*Strolls cautiously up to LADY CLARICE, hovers about her till he gets a chance of speaking to her. A general laugh from the group.*]

BLAN.

[*Who has been in centre of group.*] Oh, this is very shocking!¹ We are actually talking scandal about our host. And he has his good points. He hasn't strangled his baby, has he, Sir Winchmore?

SIR WIN.

Sir Brice has the greatest consideration for the welfare of his offspring. [DULCIE comes from other

¹ Breaks away
and moves
L. C.

room magnificently dressed, restless, pale, nervous, excited.] He never goes near it.

[An awkward little pause as they see DULCIE. LADY CLARICE goes up to her.]

LADY CLAR.

What a lot of interesting folks you always have, dear. Who is that lady in pale blue?

DUL.

Mrs. Chalmers.

LADY CLAR.

The lady who has figured so much in the newspapers lately? What a singular gift you have of attracting all sorts of people, dear.*

DUL.

Have I? That's sometimes a misfortune.

LADY CLAR.

Yes, it does involve one in undesirable acquaintances and relationships.

DUL.

Still it must be rather annoying to be without it.

[Goes restlessly to SIR WINCHMORE. LADY CLARICE shows slight mortification. MONTY, who has been watching the scene, goes up to her.]

MON.

Lady Clarice, let me give you some supper.¹

DUL.

[Taking SIR WINCHMORE a little aside.] Sir Winchmore—so kind of you to come. [In a half whisper.] That sleeping draught's no use—you must send me a stronger one.

SIR WIN.

[Shakes his head.] Lady Skene—

DUL.

[Impetuously.] Yes, yes, please—I must have it—I've not slept for three nights.

* Call Sir Brice.

¹ Takes her off R., Shar. and Lady Cran. follow them. Blanch. moves up L. C.

SIR WIN.

Lady Skene, let me beg you——

DUL.

No, no, no,— you must patch me up and keep me going somehow till the end of the season, then you shall do what you like with me.

SIR WIN.

But, Lady Skene——

DUL.

¹ *Blanch.
moves down
c.*

[*Intense suppressed nervousness.*] But——¹ [*Imploringly.*] Oh, don't contradict me.—When any one speaks to me I feel I must shriek out “Yah, yah, yah!” [BLANCHFLOWER *has overheard the last speech.* DULCIE *sees that BLANCHFLOWER is looking at her, controls herself after an immense effort, puts on society smile.* To BLANCHFLOWER.] The bishop was talking to me just now about his mission to convert the West End of London, and I could scarcely keep from shrieking out to him “Yah, yah, yah!” Isn't it strange?

BLAN.

Not at all. Clergymen always produce that effect upon me.²

² *Moves R.*

DUL.

[*Turning to SIR WINCHMORE.*] Sir Winchmore, you'll run up to the nursery and see Rosy before you go, won't you?

SIR WIN.

What's the matter?

DUL.

Nothing, only a little tumble and a bruise. My sister Nell is with her, but you'll just see her?

SIR WIN.

Certainly.

DUL.

I'm so foolish about her. [*Imploringly.*] She is strong and healthy, isn't she?

SIR WIN.

'A magnificent child.

[SIR BRICE *has entered through other room. He looks coarser and more dissipated than in first Act, and is more brutalised. There is a slight movement of all the guests away from him. SHARLAND enters R.*]

DUL.

[*Not seeing* SIR BRICE. *To* SIR WINCHMORE.]

Really? Really?

SIR WIN.

Really. Sir Brice and you may well be proud of her.

[SIR BRICE'S *entrance has caused an awkward pause amongst the guests.*]

SIR WIN.

We were talking of your youthful daughter, Sir Brice.

SIR BRICE.

I hate brats.¹

¹ Moves L.

[*Another awkward pause.*]

DUL.

[*To cover it, rattles away with forced gaiety.*] We shall see you at Ascot, of course, Mr. Blanchflower.—Sir Winchmore, what are these frightful new waters that you are sending all your patients to?—That reminds me, Lady Shalford, how is Sir Digby's gout?

[*Slight continued movement of the guests away from* SIR BRICE.]

CHAR.²² Back of sofa.

Terrible. I pack him off to Aix on Thursday.

DUL.

[*Same tone.*] So sorry he couldn't come to-night.

CHAR.

My dear, I'm very glad, and so I'm sure is everybody

who knows him. If Aix doesn't cure him, I shall try something drastic.

SIR BRICE.¹

Serve him as I did my trainer Burstow.

DUL.

[*Noticing the guests' repulsion, slightly frowns at SIR BRICE unobserved by the guests, and goes on speaking to change the subject.*] We shall go to Homburg again——²

SIR BRICE.

[*Speaks her down. To CHARLEY.*] Burstow had the gout. I treated him myself. [*Coarse little chuckle.*] * I gave him a bottle of port, champagne at intervals, and brown brandy *ad lib.* A tombstone now marks Burstow's precise position, which is longitudinal. I wrote his epitaph, but the vicar wouldn't pass it. So the vicar and I have a law-suit on.

[*Another coarse little chuckle. Another awkward little pause.*]

DUL.

[*To cover it, continues.*] Mr. Fancourt, did you make inquiries about the house-boat for us?

SIR BRICE.

We shan't go to Henley.

DUL.

[*To FANCOURT.*] Then of course you needn't make inquiries.

FAN.

But I've arranged it. My brother will be awfully delighted if you'll accept the loan of his for the Henley week. You and Sir Brice will be awfully pleased with it.

SIR BRICE.

[*More decidedly.*] We shall not go to Henley.

¹ Crosses to her, and stands L. of sofa.

² Moves L. C. with Sir W.

* Call David.

DUL.

[*Another covered frown at SIR BRICE, again controlling herself with immense effort and speaking very calmly.*] Will you thank your brother and say we shall not be going.¹

¹ *They move up C.*

[*Awkward pause. SIR BRICE puts his hands in his pockets and yawns. DULCIE engages the group in conversation, and they crowd round her.*]

SIR BRICE.

Percy,² come and have a little game of poker in the smoking-room.

² *Sharland moves down R. of him.*

SHAR.

Very sorry, Bricey, haven't so much as a fiver with me.

SIR BRICE.

You can borrow. Can't you borrow, eh?

SHAR.

Very sorry, dear old chap; never borrow or lend.

[*Exit.*³ SIR BRICE stands and yawns, looks sulky and vicious, then calls out.]

³ *Shar. goes off L.*

SIR BRICE.

Fancourt. [FANCOURT glances but does not come.]

Fan—Fan, I say——[*At length FANCOURT comes.*⁴]

We're getting up a little hand at poker just to wind up this infernally dull evening.

⁴ *Fan. comes down on Sir Brice's R. They move L., where Sir Brice sits; Fan. stands behind him.*

FAN.

[*Shakes his head and laughs.*] Not good enough, Bricey—not good enough.

[REMON enters L. *At his entrance guests show marked interest, and the conversation stops. SIR BRICE watches with a sulky expression. DULCIE shows great pleasure, goes to meet REMON.*]

DUL.

I'm so glad you've come. You have so many engagements. [Shakes hands.]

DAVID.

None more pleasing than this.

BLAN.

I insist on knowing Mr. Remon—somebody introduce me—introduce me.¹

¹ *Moves front of sofa to c.*

DUL.

Mr. Remon—Mr. Percy Blanchflower.

BLAN.

I'm so delighted to know you. We want to look at Venus through that large telescope of yours.

DAVID.

It's in the South of France.

BLAN.

I go there every winter. We were talking about your wonderful discoveries—hum? eh? We want to know all about them.

DAVID.

Oh, spare me, or rather, yourselves.²[SIR BRICE *laughs.*]

FAN.

You seem to have got something good all to yourself, Bricey.

SIR BRICE.

Yes, I have.

[*Laughs.*]

BLAN.

[*Aside, to SIR WINCHMORE.*] What is Remon's discovery? eh?

SIR WIN.

Haven't the least idea—something about Saturn, I fancy.

BLAN.

[*Buzzes up to REMON.*] Your last discovery now—about Saturn, wasn't it—hum? eh?³

³ *Sits on sofa.*

[*All through DAVID's conversation with the guests, he adopts the same light, frivolous tone throughout, and speaks without the least suggestion of seriousness. This gives a contrast to the scenes with DULCIE.*]

DAVID.

[*Amused, very light and chaffing tone.*] About Saturn? Oh yes. My conjecture is that bad folks when they die are sent to Saturn to study current theology, and if at the end of five hundred years they know anything about it, their probation is complete.

[*General laugh. DAVID turns to group. SIR BRICE laughs.*]

FAN.

What is it, Bricey?

SIR BRICE.

Lady Skene is making a howling fuss with all of you to-night. She'll make a howling fuss of another kind next week. I can't stand that astronomer fellow.¹

BLAN.

But do tell us, Lady Skene, what is Mr. Remon's great speciality—hum? eh?

DUL.

I believe Mr. Remon has devoted a great deal of time to the study of sun-spots.²

BLAN.

Oh—ah, yes—hum. Now [to DAVID] what is the special function of sun-spots—hum? eh? What do they do?

DAVID.

[*Still amused, chaffing, mysterious.*] I've long had a suspicion that there is a very subtle connection between sun-spots and politics—in fact, I am convinced that the present decadence of political manners and morals is entirely caused by the persistence of a certain sun-spot. As soon as we can remove it, the natural in-

¹ Fan. moves up and over R.

² Back of sofa.

¹ *Blanch. goes R. and joins group there. Sir Brice rises and goes C.*

grained honesty and patriotism of our politicians will reassert themselves. [General laugh.¹]

SIR BRICE.

[Pushes a little forward with a rather insolent manner to DAVID.] My character is always puzzling me. Can you tell me whether its present development is due to sun-spots?

DAVID.

[Is about to reply rather angrily, is checked by a look from DULCIE, speaks very politely.] You might not think me polite, Sir Brice.

SIR BRICE.

[Persisting.] I should like to have a scientific examination made of my character.

DAVID.

[Still controlling himself.] I fear I should not make a sympathetic operator.²

² *Joins group R.*

SIR BRICE.

[Still persisting.] But——

DUL.

[Who has been watching very apprehensively, to SIR BRICE.] My dear, Lady Franklin wants to ask you something about a horse for Ascot. She was here a moment ago. [Looking around, drawing SIR BRICE away from the group, who close up round REMON. DULCIE is getting SIR BRICE away.] For God's sake keep away from us! [A guest is just passing, DULCIE turns to her with a forced society smile and manner.] How do you do? What a sweet frock! [Shakes hands with guest, who passes on.]

SIR BRICE.

[Sulkily.] What's the matter?

[Approaching her.]

DUL.

Don't go near any one You smell of brandy.*

* *Violin and piano off L.*

[*All this under breath with great terror and apprehension.*]

SIR BRICE.

[*Getting a little nearer her.*] I rather like the smell of brandy.

DUL.

[*Terrified, under breath.*] Keep away—keep away—if you come a step nearer to me I shall shriek out before everybody. You nearly drove me out of my mind this morning. Oh, for Heaven's sake—do go—do go!

SIR BRICE.¹

¹ *Crossing L.*

Well, as it's infernally slow here I will go—but—you may as well know, there will be no Ascot, no Henley, no Goodwood, no Homburg, no anything. We shall be sold up within a month.

DUL.

[*Is staggering for a moment.*]

SIR BRICE.

Ta ta!—my blessing—I'm going to the Club.

[*Exit L. DULCIE stands overwhelmed for a moment, tries to pull herself together, staggers a little. DAVID, who has been watching her and SIR BRICE, leaves the group and comes to her, speaks with great feeling, very softly, his tone and manner to her in great contrast to his tone and manner with the guests.*]

DAVID.

Lady Skene, you are in trouble—you are ill.²

DUL.

[*Again with the forced society smile.*] No, only the fatigue of the season, and the rooms are so crowded, aren't they?³

[*A group of guests begin little gestures and signifi-*

² *General exit of guests off R. Blanch, Sir W., Fan, Charley, move up c. Thomson enters L., and goes up c. onto balcony.*

³ *Crossing R. c., and sitting.*

cant glances and whispers, watching DAVID and DULCIE.]

[EDDIE re-enters, and unnoticed looks from one group to the other.¹]

DAVID.

I'll tell Sir Winchmore.

DUL.

No, don't take any notice. If I can only get through this evening! [*With a sudden instinct, appealing to him with great entreaty.*] Tell me something that will carry me through this next hour till they have all gone. Give me that sort of medicine!

DAVID.

[*With the utmost tenderness and feeling, in a low voice, bending over her. The glances and whispers continued.*] Your trouble isn't real. This society world of yours isn't a real world. There's one little star in Andromeda where everything is real. You've wandered down here amongst these shadows when you should have stayed at home.

DUL.

[*Pleased, lending herself to his suggestions.*] Aren't these real men and women?

DAVID.

No. They are only masquerading. Good God, I think we are all masquerading! Look at them! If you touched them with reality they would vanish. And so with your trouble of to-night. Fly back to Andromeda, and you will see what a dream all this is.

DUL.

How strange! I was half dead a moment ago, and you've made me so well and happy. But you—you belong to Andromeda,—or to this world?

[EDDIE has been watching and comes down near to them.]

DAVID.

To both. But the little star in Andromeda is my home. I'm only wandering with you amongst these phantoms.

[*They have become for the moment quite absorbed.*

EDDIE, who has been watching the whispers and smiles, comes up to them, speaks rather sharply.¹]

EDDIE.

Lady Skene—that lamp-shade—[*Pointing off.*] Won't it catch fire? [*Taking DAVID's arm, dragging him away.*] I want to talk to you, Davy.

[*DULCIE turns to manservant, points to the lamp-shade, and gives him directions concerning it.*]

DAVID.

[*Turns savagely on EDDIE, growls.*] Why the devil did you come between us?

EDDIE.

Don't you care for her, Davy?

DAVID.

Care for her?

[*DULCIE having given manservant instructions, goes to guests.*]

EDDIE.

Do you know what these folks are saying? That Sir Brice is ruined, and that you have lately come into a fortune.²

DAVID.

Well?

EDDIE.

And that she continues her parties, her dresses, her house, because you——

[*Stops, looks at DAVID.*]

DAVID.

[*Looks around at guests savagely. Stands for a mo-*

¹ Eddie leans over sofa. Dulcie rises and goes R. Thomson comes from c. She directs him off R., and follows him.

² Monty and Lady Clarice enter from R., and stand talking in doorway. Dulcie re-enters and joins them.

ment or two reflecting, his face then assumes a look of great resolve.]

EDDIE.

[*Watching him.*] I was right to tell you, Davy?

DAVID.

[*Shakes EDDIE's hand in reply. Another little pause.*] Go and tell her, Eddie, that I must see her for a few minutes by and by—to-night—when everybody is gone.

EDDIE.

What are you going to do, Davy?

DAVID.

We'll get away south to-morrow, old boy. The observatory's nearly finished, and—there's no tittle-tattle between the snows and the stars. Go and tell her I must see her, and bring me back her answer.¹

EDDIE.

[*To DULCIE.*] You've not been down to supper, Lady Skene.

DUL.

I really don't want any.

EDDIE.

But I've a message for you.

DUL.

A message?

EDDIE.

From Andromeda.

[*Exeunt DULCIE and EDDIE.*] *

LADY CLAR.

You are really too dreadful.²

BLAN.

[*Buzzing round REMON.*] That's a charming theory of yours about the effect of sun-spots on morality.

¹ Eddie goes to Dulcie who is talking to guests up R. David moves up to Blanch. and Charlie, who rise from sofa and come down c.

* Violin and piano cease. Warn band.

² Goes into balcony c., and talks to Sir W. Mon. goes down back of sofa.

DAVID.

Yes. It isn't true, but it's very consoling. That's why I invented it.¹

MON.

If it's charming and consoling, why should it be true?

DAVID.

Why should it? and put everything else out of focus.

BLAN.

Out of focus! Ah! I'm afraid you're a dreadful, dreadful pessimist.

DAVID.

No; but I'm as willing to play that part as any other, since it's only in jest.*

CHAR.

In jest? What do you mean?

DAVID.

I have to spend so much time alone amongst the stars, that when I come back into the world I am quite at a loss. I find myself amongst crowds of shadows—very charming shadows they are—playing at money-making, playing at religion, playing at love, at art, at politics, at all sorts of odd games, and so for the time, I join in the game, and pretend to take an interest in it; and a very pleasant game it is, so long as we don't mistake it for reality.

CHAR.

But surely we are realities!

DAVID.

With the profoundest respect in the world, Lady Shalford, I cannot bring myself to believe that you are. Still, I won't spoil your game by staying out.²

BLAN.

[*With a little affected, mincing earnestness.*] Oh, but surely, surely there is Something real Somewhere.

¹ *Lady Cran. and Carter enter R. and go into balcony C. They are followed by a lady and gentleman. Two others come on and cross to sofa up L.*

* *Orchestral selection on stage.*

² *Sits L. of her.*

Oh, yes—surely, surely—we must believe that there is—hum? eh?—a Kind of—eh?—a Sort of a Something—Somewhere, eh?

DAVID.

If you like to believe there is a kind of a sort of a something—somewhere—and you find it consoling, I'm as willing to pretend to believe that as anything else.

BLAN.

[*Still with the same affected earnestness.*] Oh, but surely, when you look into your own heart—hum? eh? ¹——

¹ Moves L. C.

DAVID.

I always wear a mask over my heart. I never dare look into it.²

² Rises and moves L. Monty takes place vacated by David. Sir W. bids good night to lady and gentlemen up L. and exit R.

MON.

I find this world a remarkably comfortable and well-arranged place. I always do exactly as I like. If I want anything I buy it, whether I pay for it or no. If I see a woman I admire I make love to her, whether she belongs to another man or no. If a lie will answer my purpose, I tell it. I can't remember I ever denied myself one single pleasure in life; nor have I ever put myself out to oblige a fellow-creature. I am consistently selfish and I find it pays; I credit everybody else with the same consistent selfishness, and I am never deceived in my estimate of character. These are my principles, and I always act up to them. And I assure you I find this world the pleasantest possible place.

DAVID.

A fairy palace! An enchanted spot! Only take care! While you are dancing, there may be a volcano underneath.

³ Eddie enters R., and goes over to David. Lady Clarice and Carter come down from balcony and go R.

MON.

If there is, surely dancing is the pleasantest preparation for the general burst-up.³

EDDIE.

Davy——

DAVID.

[*Goes to him.*] Well?

EDDIE.

She'll see you to-night. Come back here when they've all gone.

BLAN.

[*To MONTY.*] How charmingly frank you are, Monty.

MON.

Why not?¹ We have one supreme merit in this generation—we have ceased to render to virtue the homage of hypocrisy.

DAVID.

And our moral evolution is now complete. Good-night!

[*Exeunt DAVID and EDDIE.*¹ *]

MON.

[*Coming down with LADY CLARICE.*] Of course I know there is something wretchedly philistine and provincial about marriage, but I will take care this aspect of it is never presented to you.

LADY CLAR.

I wonder what makes marriage so unlovely and so uninteresting?

MON.

The exaggerated notion that prevails of its duties and responsibilities. Once do away with that, and it becomes an ideal state. Lady Clarice, you'd find me the most agreeable partner in the world.

LADY CLAR.

You'd be like most other husbands, I suppose.

¹ *Rising.*

* *Music ceases.*

¹ *Fan. and Char. go up stage to balcony. Lady and gentleman rise from sofa up L. and exit R. Lady and gentleman on balcony bid good night to Fan. and Char. and exit L. Lady Clar. sits on sofa R. Monty sits L. of her.*

MON.

No; I should be unique. Husbands, as a rule, are foolish, jealous brutes, who insist that men shall have all the rights and women all the duties,—men shall have all the sweets and women all the sour of the marriage state. We would start on an entirely new plan. The sour we would naturally equally avoid, and the sweets,—if there are any,—we would naturally do our best to secure.

LADY CLAR.

Separately, or together?

MON.

According to our tastes. If you do me the honour to accept me, I pledge you my word I will never have the offensively bad taste to speak of a husband's rights. There shall be no "lord and master" nonsense.

LADY CLAR.

It sounds very well in theory. I wonder how it would work.

MON.

Let us try. If we succeed we shall solve the vexed question of the age, and make ourselves happy in showing mankind the road to happiness.

LADY CLAR.

But if we fail?

MON.

We shall have sacrificed ourselves for the benefit of our species. But we can't fail, the plan is perfect.

LADY CLAR.

If I spoke of rights and duties—if I were jealous——

MON.

Ah! then you would be departing from the plan. Its charm is that it is a patent, self-adjusting, self-

repairing, safety-valve plan, with double escapement action suited to all climates and dispositions.* No rights, no duties, no self-assertion, no quarrels, no jealousy.

* Call. Helen.
Baby.

LADY CLAR.

And no love?

MON.

Love is a perverted animal instinct, which is really a great bar to solid happiness in marriage. Believe me, you will like me and respect me in the end for not pretending to any such outworn impulses. You see I am frank.

LADY CLAR.

You are indeed. [*Looking at him very closely, watching him.*] You know—[*Pause.*—my father cannot make any great settlements, and—[*Watching him closely.*] I have no expectations.

MON.

[*Stands it without flinching.*] So I am aware. I'm frightfully in debt, and I have no expectations. But there is a house in Grosvenor Place—it would suit us exactly.

LADY CLAR.

[*Watching him.*] But—without money?

MON.

I cannot afford to be economical. I have acted on that principle throughout life, and I have always had the very best of everything. I do not see we need change it.

LADY CLAR.

You are perfectly atrocious—I don't care for you in the least.¹

MON.

[*With great politeness.*] My plan is precisely adapted to such cases.

¹ Carter and
Lady Cran.
enter from R.
Cross stage to
down L.

LADY CRAN.

Come, Clarice—everybody is going.

[*Exit.*¹]

MON.

I shall call on Lord Crandover to-morrow. You don't speak. Does silence give consent?

LADY CLAR.

I can't help your calling.

[*Exit.* MONTY stands in slight deliberation.

CHARLEY comes out from the conservatory behind him. She has been watching the last part of the scene from the conservatory.]

CHAR.

Well?

MON.

Landed, I think. You're sure about Sir Joseph and the estate?

CHAR.

Quite. But it's not to be known yet. I'm a pet, ain't I?

MON.

You are.

[*Kisses her hand.*]

CHAR.

I must be going. That creature at home will be raising furies.

MON.

When do you pack him to Aix?

CHAR.

Thursday, praise the Lord!

MON.

When shall I call?

CHAR.

Friday?

¹ Charlie and Fan, rise and enter from balcony. Fan, bids Charlie good night and and exit R.

MON.

What time?

CHAR.

Come to lunch?

MON.

Yes.

CHAR.

Friday at two. [*Exchange looks full of meaning.*]
Bye-bye.

MON.

Bye-bye.¹

CHAR.

Oh dear, am I the last? Good-bye, dear [*Kisses*
DULCIE.] Monty, come and see me to my carriage.²

MON.

Good-bye, Lady Skene.

DUL.

Good-bye.

[*Exit MONTY with CHARLEY.*³]

DUL.

[*To Servant.*] Thomson, I expect Mr. Remon.
Show him in here.⁴

SERV.

Yes, my lady.⁵

[*Exit. HELEN appears at R. door still in nurse's*
*costume.*⁶]

HELEN.

[*Peeps in.*] They have all gone, dear.

DUL.

I've got such a fever, Nell. Put your nice cold hand
on my forehead. That's right. Hold it tight—tight.
Why, didn't you dress and come into my party?

HELEN.

I was so tired and bored at the last, and I wanted
to be with Rosy.⁷

¹ *Dulcie enters*
R. Charley
hurriedly
drops Mon-
ty's hand
and goes up
to Dulcie.

² *Goes down L.*
Monty joins
Dulcie.

³ *Thomson has*
followed Dul-
cie on and is
releasing
curtains at
door R.

⁴ *Time off R. is*
turned out.

⁵ *Crosses and*
exit L.

⁶ *Joins Dulcie*
who is seated
on sofa R.

⁷ *Leaning over*
sofa.

DUL.

She's all right?

HELEN.

Yes. She was awake a moment ago.

DUL.

[*Suddenly.*] Fetch her! I must see her! Oh, you're right, Nell; it's been a hateful evening, with only one bright spot in it—when he came and whispered something so sweet.

HELEN.

[*Suddenly.*] Dulcie, you're sure of yourself?

DUL.

I'm sure of him.

HELEN.

He has never spoken—of—of——

DUL.

Of love? Never. What does that matter? I know he loves me.

HELEN.

Dulcie, you shouldn't say that—even to yourself.¹

DUL.

Oh, that's all nonsense, Nell; as if there was ever a woman in this world that didn't know when she was loved!

HELEN.

Dulcie!

DUL.

[*Provokingly.*] He loves me! He loves me! He loves me, and I'm not ashamed of it, and I don't care who knows it. [*Throwing her arms round HELEN'S neck.*] Nell, I'm so happy.

HELEN.

Why?

¹ Sits R. of Dulcie.

DUL.

He's coming, he's coming. Brice says we are utterly ruined. We're ruined, but I won't feel it to-night. I'll feel it to-morrow. I'll be happy for one minute to-night. He is coming.

HELEN.

Mr. Remon?

DUL.

Yes. Don't look shocked, Nell. Listen; this is true. Mr. Remon and I have never said one word to each other that all the world might not have heard. [*Pause.*] I'm glad all the world hasn't heard it though.

[THOMSON *comes in*, announces MR. REMON.]

DUL.

[*To HELEN.*] Go and fetch Rosy. Yes! Yes!

[*Exit HELEN.* DAVID *has entered*; *Servant has gone off.*¹]

[*To DAVID.*] I'm so glad you've come. I want you to see Rosy. She's awake. You've never seen her. [*All this very excited.*]

DAVID.

I shall be very pleased. [*Looking at her.*]

DUL.

You're thinking about me.

DAVID.

I was thinking that a mother is the most beautiful thing on earth.

DUL.

Oh, you don't know! You can't imagine! She's over two years old, and I haven't got over remembering that she's mine. Every time I think of her I feel a little catch here in the very middle of my heart, a delicious little stab, as if some angel came behind

¹ After Thomson has gone, chandelier off L. is turned out and with it the time light.

me and whispered to me, "God has made you a present of ten hundred thousand million pounds all your own." Oh, she makes up to me for everything.

[DAVID is approaching her with great tenderness when HELEN enters with ROSY, the two-year-old baby, in her arms in nightclothes.]

DUL.

[Rushes to HELEN.] There! There! You may look at her!

HELEN.

Hush! She's asleep!

DUL.

I must kiss her if it kills her! [*Hugging the baby, kisses her, lifts the nightgown, kisses the baby's feet, croons over it—points her finger mockingly at REMON in childlike mockery and laughter.*] There! There! There, Mr. Philosopher from Andromeda! You can't say a mother's love isn't real!

DAVID.

I never did. It's the one thing that shows what a sham the rest of the world is. That little star in Andromeda is crowded with mothers. They've all been there once in their lives.

[*Bends over the baby for a moment.*]

DUL.

[*Exited, feverish.*] Nell, Mr. Remon has an odd notion that this world isn't real.

HELEN.

The cure for that is to earn half-a-crown a day and live on it.

DAVID.

Oh yes, I know. Work is real.

[*Bends over the baby.*]

DUL.

[*To DAVID.*] What are you looking at? [*Scrutinises*

him carefully; then suddenly, with savage earnestness, half despair, half entreaty.] She's like me? She's like me!! [*crescendo, tigerish, frenzied.*] Say she's like me!!!

DAVID.

[*Very quietly.*] She is like you. [*Kisses the child reverently.*] She is wholly like you!

DUL.

[*Stands absorbed, very quietly.*] Take her back again to the nursery, Nell.¹

¹ *Sits on sofa R.*

HELEN.

Good-night, Mr. Remon.

DAVID.

Good-night. [*Goes towards the door with her.*]

HELEN.

[*To DAVID, smiling.*] I've just remembered something else that is real.

DAVID.

What's that?

HELEN.

Duty.

[*Exit with baby. A summer sunrise shines pink through the conservatory, and lights up the room with summer morning light. DAVID returns to DULCIE, who sits absorbed.*]²

DAVID.³

Lady Skene, I asked to see you because—it is necessary for me to leave England very soon.

DUL.

No—no!

DAVID.

Yes—yes. I never use the word “honour” about my conduct, because every scamp has used it until it's the most counterfeit word in the language. But I've

² *Limes on balcony slowly change from blue to yellow.*

³ *Coming down to back of sofa.*

just learned that if I stay in England I shall injure very deeply a friend of mine, so naturally I'm going away.

DUL.

But—tell me—[*Pause.*]—what——

DAVID.

If I stay I cannot continue an honest man. Will you let it rest there?

DUL.

If you wish——

DAVID.

¹ *Sits R. of her.
Call Sir
Brice.*

[*After a little pause,¹ with some embarrassment.*] I have just heard—I scarcely know how to mention it—that you may be placed in a position of some difficulty.

DUL.

You mean that Sir Brice is ruined. In one way it's a relief, because at any rate it will break up this life, and I'm so tired of it.

DAVID.

Yet you thought you would like it on that night of the Hunt Ball.

DUL.

Yes. I longed for it. Is life like that all through?

DAVID.

Like what?

DUL.

To long for a thing very much and to find it worthless, and then to long for something else much more—to be sure that this is worth having—to get it, and then to find that that is worthless too. And so on, and so on, and so on?

DAVID.

I'm afraid life is very much like that on this particular planet.

DUL.

Oh, but that would be awful if I found out that—
[*Stops.*]

DAVID.

What?

DUL.

Nothing. You remember that night of the Hunt Ball?

DAVID.

[*Nods.*] It was the last time I saw my friend George Copeland. He died in Alaska six months after.

DUL.

And you went away for over a year.

DAVID.

No—only for a few weeks. After Copeland's funeral I went to the Mediterranean to choose a site for my observatory, and I was back in England within less than three months.

DUL.

But we never saw you till last season. Where were you?

DAVID.

When you were in the country, I was there; when you were in town I was in town too. I have never been far away from you. I have kept an account of every time I have seen you for the last three years.

DUL.

[*Looks at him as if suddenly struck with a thought.*]
Tell me—where were you two years ago last March?

DAVID.

At Gerard's Heath—near you.

DUL.

[*Suddenly.*] Did you—the night Rosy was—I mean the night of the second—it was a dreadful snow-storm—

DAVID.

I remember.

DUL.

One of my nurses said she saw some one in the garden.
[Looks at him.]

DAVID.

It was I. Your life was in danger. I passed those
 two nights outside your window.

*[DULCIE, with great affection, involuntarily puts her
 hand on his arm. He raises her hand and is about
 to kiss it. HELEN re-enters. DAVID rises.]*

HELEN.

Sir Brice has just come back and is in the smoking-
 room downstairs.

DUL.

¹ *Rises, goes to
 door R.*

[Turning.] Look! It's morning.¹

DAVID.

Good-bye.

DUL.

[Suddenly.] No—I must have another word with
 you. Wait here a moment. Here is Sir Brice. Nell,
 take Mr. Remon on to the balcony for a minute or
 two and wait there with him till Sir Brice has gone
 upstairs.

*[Exeunt DAVID and HELEN through conservatory
 and on to balcony.]*

*[SIR BRICE enters, looking a little flushed and dissi-
 pated.]*²

² *Goes down R.
 of sofa.*

SIR BRICE.

[Staring at DULCIE; after a pause.] Well?

DUL.

Well?

SIR BRICE.

³ *Sits on sofa.*

[Drops into a chair; whistles.] Got rid of your
 friends?³

DUL.

All except Mr. Remon. He's on the balcony with Nell.

SIR BRICE.

Oh! [*Pause. Whistles; takes some change out of his pocket—three shillings and threepence; places the coins very carefully and elaborately in a longitudinal position on the palm of his left hand, arranging the three shillings and the three pennies in a line, whistling carelessly.*] That's our net fortune, my girl. [*Holding them up under her face.*] That is our precise capital—three shillings and threepence. [*Whistles.*] Not another farthing. And some thousand pounds' worth of debts.¹

¹Rises and goes
round sofa L.

DUL.

[*Unconcerned.*] Indeed.

SIR BRICE.

[*With a sudden little burst of brutality—not too marked.*] Look here! can't you get some money?

DUL.

What do you mean?

SIR BRICE.

Get some money! That's plain English, isn't it?

DUL.

I don't understand you.

SIR BRICE.

This fellow Remon is devilish fond of you. Can't you get some money from him?

DUL.

Hush! Borrow money from him!

SIR BRICE.

[*Suggestively.*] You needn't borrow. [*DULCIE looks at him inquiringly.*] Now can't you get some?

[*DULCIE looks at him for a moment; she raises her*

fan to strike him; sees DAVID, who has entered from conservatory. HELEN stands at conservatory door.]

DAVID.

¹ Comes C.

Lady Skene,¹ I have been obliged to overhear what has just been said. To-morrow morning I leave for the South of France, and I shall be quite inaccessible for some years. My bankers will have orders to send you a cheque-book and to honour your signature to any extent that you are likely to require. [DULCIE makes a protest.] If you please—if you please. As I shall be away from England there cannot be the least slur upon you in accepting it. Miss Larondie, you will be with your sister, always.² She will be in your care—always. [Shakes hands with HELEN.] Be very kind to her. Never leave her. Good-bye.³

² Helen comes down R. C.

³ Crosses L.

DUL.

But I—cannot—take——

DAVID.

[*Silencing her.*] If you please—It is my last request. Good-bye.

[SIR BRICE, *who has been sitting all the while, listening, rises.*]

DAVID.

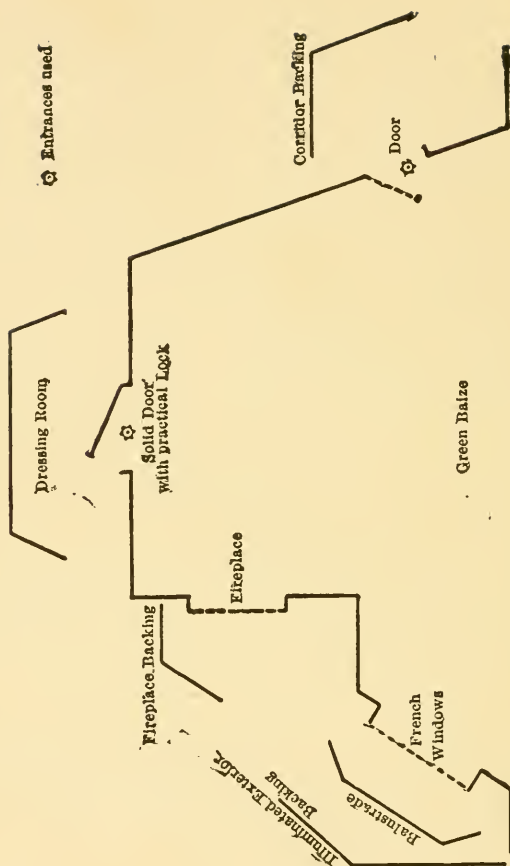
[*Looks at him for just half a moment; looks at DULCIE.*] Good-bye. [Exit. L.]

[*Nine months pass between Acts II. and III.*]

THE MASQUERADERS

SCENE GROUND PLAN

ACT III



ACT III.

SCENE.—*Private sitting-room at the Hôtel Prince De Galles, Nice.*

A rather handsome modern room furnished in French hotel fashion. Two long windows, right, curtained. Door at back. Door left. Small card table down stage, left, with several packs of cards loosely on it. The whole floor round the table strewn with cards. Discover SIR BRICE in evening dress seated left of table, aimlessly and mechanically playing with the cards. After a few seconds DULCIE, in dinner dress, enters from door at back, crosses to the window and stands looking out, having taken no notice of SIR BRICE. As she enters he leaves off playing with the cards for a moment, looks at her.

SIR BRICE.

[*In rather a commanding tone, a little brutal.*]
Come here.*

[*DULCIE takes no notice. A little pause.*]

SIR BRICE.

[*Louder.*] D'ye hear? Come here.

[*DULCIE comes down to him, does not speak. He looks up at her. Her face is quite blank, looking indifferently in front of her.*]

SIR BRICE.

[*Begins playing with cards again.*] I've lost over six hundred pounds. [*DULCIE takes no notice.*]

*Call. Dulcie,
Sir Brice,
Servant
(salver and
letter).*

** Music to take
up curtain.*

SIR BRICE.

[*Dashes the pack of cards under his feet, stamps on them.*] Damn and damn the cards!

[*DULCIE takes no notice. Slight pause.*]

SIR BRICE.

[*Roars out.*] The hotel people have sent up their bill again with a request for payment.

[*Slight pause. DULCIE goes back to the window, stands there looking out. Pause.*]

SIR BRICE.

[*Roars out furiously.*] Why the devil don't you get something for that deafness of yours! [*Suddenly jumps up, goes up to her, seizes her hands, turns her round.*] Now look here——

*Hotel Servant enters, left, with letter on tray. SIR BRICE desists. The Hotel Servant brings the letter to DULCIE, who crosses and takes it. Exit Servant. DULCIE opens letter, reads it.*¹

¹ Crosses to fireplace.

SIR BRICE.

Well? [*DULCIE rings bell.*] Well?

[*Servant enters L.*]

DUL.

[*In cold equable tone, to SIR BRICE.*] Mr. Edward Remon wishes to see me. He asks me to excuse his being in fancy dress. He's going to the Opera Ball. Shall I see him here or in the hall?

SIR BRICE.

Here.

DUL.

[*To Servant.*] Show Mr. Remon here.

[*Exit Servant, L.*]

SIR BRICE.

[To DULCIE.] Where's his brother, the astronomer?

DUL.

At his observatory, I suppose. I've not seen him since the night we began to live upon him.¹

¹ Cross R. C.

[Hotel Servant opens door L., announces MR. EDWARD REMON. EDDIE enters, dressed as Pierrot for the fancy dress ball. Exit Servant.²]

² Sir Brice moves up to fire.

EDDIE.

[All through the Act very excited.] How d'ye do?
[To DULCIE; shakes hands with her. To SIR BRICE.] How d'ye do?

SIR BRICE.

How d'ye do?³

³ Crossing back of table to down L.

[Looks meaningly at DULCIE and exit left.]

⁴ Sits sofa R.

EDDIE.

So good of you to excuse this dress.⁴ *

* Call Montagu.

DUL.

Your brother?

EDDIE.

He's down in the town with me to-night. We've been dining at the Café de Paris. I've taken three glasses of champagne—anything more than a spoonful makes me tipsy, and so, with that and this dress, and our journey to Africa, I'm quite mad to-night.

DUL.

Africa!

EDDIE.

We start early to-morrow morning to the deadliest place on the West Coast.

DUL.

Not your brother?

EDDIE.

Yes. We're going to watch the transit of Venus, and as there was a jolly lot of fever there all the other astronomers rather funk'd it. So Davy has fitted out an expedition himself. [DULCIE *shows great concern.* EDDIE *rattles on.*] I'm going to have a spree to-night. I've never been drunk in my life, and I thought I should like to try what it's like—because—[*tossing up a coin*] it's heads we come back alive and prove Davy's theory about sun-spots—and it's tails we leave our bones and all our apparatus out there. It's tails—we're as dead as door-nails. [*Sees DULCIE's pained face.*] Lady Skene—I'm so sorry——

DUL.

We've been three weeks in Nice. Why hasn't your brother come to see me?

EDDIE.

¹ *Eddie kneels beside her and puts cap on R. C. chair.*

A mistaken sense of duty.¹ Davy has the oddest notions about duty. He thinks one ought to do it when it's unpleasant. So do I when I'm in my right clothes, and my right senses, but now I'm half tipsy, and have got a fool's cap on,² I can see quite plainly that duty's all moonshine. Duty is doing exactly what one likes, and it's Davy's duty to come to you. And the fool is just breaking his heart for a sight of you.³ Shall I find him and bring him?

² *Picks up cap.*

³ *Runs over to L. C., then round table to back of sofa R.*

DUL.

Where is he?

EDDIE.

He's in the town getting everything ready for to-morrow. Shall I find him?

DUL.

[*Looking at her watch.*] Quarter to eleven. I may be alone in half an hour. Yes, bring him to me here.

EDDIE.

Hurrah!—*Au revoir.*¹

[SIR BRICE *appears at the same door, looks after EDDIE, who exits, saying "Adieu."* SIR BRICE *shuts door, enters.*]

SIR BRICE.

[*To DULCIE.*] Well?

[DULCIE *does not reply, goes to her room at back, SIR BRICE follows her, the door is closed in his face and a lock is heard to turn. SIR BRICE shakes the door handle, kicks the door, looks vicious and spiteful, comes down a step or two, kicks a hassock.*²]

[*Servant enters, L., announcing Mr. LUSHINGTON. Enter MONTY.* SIR BRICE *nods.*]

MON.

Well, dear chum! [*Looking round at the cards on the floor.*] Did you give Fancourt his revenge?

SIR BRICE.

Damn the cards.

MON.

By all means. How's Lady Skene?

SIR BRICE.

[*Mutters.*]—mn Lady Skene.

MON.

By all means.

SIR BRICE.

You're married, Lushington——³

MON.

I am three months a bridegroom.

SIR BRICE.

Why the devil did you get married?

¹ Runs across and opens door L.

² Moves R.

* Call. Lady Clarice—Charley.

³ Moves to him.

MON.

Because I ascertained that my wife would have seven thousand a year. Why did you?

SIR BRICE.

Because I was a silly fool.

MON.

Well, there couldn't be two better reasons for getting married.

SIR BRICE.

[*Furious with his cards.*] —mn everything and everybody.¹

¹ Sits.

MON.

By all means. And now we've reached finality and are utterly the sport of destiny, will you do me a good turn?²

² Sits L. of table.

SIR BRICE.

What?

MON.

I'm going to take a lady to the Opera Ball, and I fear Lady Clarice will be dull, or I should say *restless*, in my absence. I know you will be going to the Cercle d'Amerique to wreck your farthing chance of eternity at poker.

SIR BRICE.

Well?

MON.

It would momentarily reinstate your celestial hopes if you would tell Lady Skene that I'm going to the club with you, and persuade her to spend the lonely hours of her widowhood with Lady Clarice in number one-four-three. They will doubtless tear our characters to rags, but that will keep them from the worse mischief of interfering with us.

SIR BRICE.

Will you do me a good turn?

MON.

Anything in my power.

SIR BRICE.

Lend me a couple of hundred pounds.

MON.

My dear Bricey. If my I. O. U., or my name, or my presence, is good for anything at the Cercle d'Amerique, you're welcome to it.

SIR BRICE.

Will you come with me and set me afloat for a quarter of an hour?

MON.

Certainly.¹

¹ *Rising and crossing R.*

SIR BRICE.

I'll ask Lady Skene. [*Goes up to the door at back, raps.*] Are you there? [*A little louder.*] Are you there?

MON.

Throw in a "my dear," Bricey, or some such trifle. Its effect will be in proportion to its scarcity.

SIR BRICE.

My dear [*Rapping still.*] Mr. Lushington has called. [*Rapping.*] Do you hear, my love? [*With a grim sneer on the last word. The door is a little opened.*] [*SIR BRICE forces his way in.*] Lady Clarice wants to know if you will go and sit with her while——

[*The remainder of sentence is lost by the closing of door after him.*]

[*LADY CLARICE enters door, left,² with opera cloak.*]

² *Leaves door open.*

MON.

[*Showing surprise, which he instantly checks.*] Where so gay and free, my love?

CLAR.

[*Looking him straight in the face very determinedly.*]
To the Opera Ball.

MON.

Oh.

CLAR.

You're going to take that woman.

MON.

I know many *ladies*, but no *women*.

CHAR.

[*Her voice heard outside.*] Yes. See if Mr. Lushington is there, and say a lady is waiting for him in the hall—oh, he's in there; I'll go in.

[*MONTY is going. LADY CLARICE makes a little movement to intercept him.*]

MON.

[*In a low voice.*] Don't be foolish.

CHAR.

[*Her voice at door, outside.*] Aren't you nearly ready, Monty? [*Appears at door, sees LADY CLARICE takes in the situation at a glance, has a slight shock, but instantly recovers herself. Runs to LADY CLARICE brimming with affection.*] Darling, are you going too? So pleased! So charmed! How sweet of you! [*Offers to kiss LADY CLARICE.*]

CLAR.

[*Indignantly.*] How dare you !¹

MON.

[*Stepping between them.*] Hush! [*To CLARICE.*] What's the use of having a row here, or anywhere? For Heaven's sake, do be a good sensible girl, and don't shatter the happiness of our married life before—before we know where we are. Charley and I are going to the Opera Ball, will you come with us?

¹ Crosses R.

CLAR.

[*Indignant.*] What!

MON.

Or go by yourself. Or go with any one you please.
Or go anywhere or do anything in the world you like.
Only don't make a scene here.

CLAR.

My father shall know.

MON.

Very well. Very well. We'll discuss that by and
by. But do recognise once and for all the futility of
rows. You'd better come with us.

[*Enter SIR BRICE C.*]

CLAR.

Come with you? ¹

CHAR.

¹ *Sir Brice goes
down R.*

[*Begins.*] My dear Clarice, I assure you——

MON.

[*Stops CHARLEY with a warning look.*] For
Heaven's sake, Clarice, whatever we do, do not let
us make ourselves ridiculous. [*MONTY snatches up
LADY CLARICE'S arm. She reluctantly allows him to
do so.**] All right, Bricey. Sorry I can't come
with you to the club—but I've persuaded Lady
Clarice and Lady Shalford to come to the Opera Ball
with me. Bye, bye, dear crony, our love to Lady
Skene. Hope you will have as pleasant an evening
as we shall—Ta! Ta!

* *Call. Helen.*

[*Exit ¹ with great animation, LADY CLARICE holding
reluctantly and aloof on one arm, CHARLEY more
affectionate on the other. SIR BRICE goes to
DULCIE'S door, throws it wide open, stands back,
calls.*]

¹ *Exit door L.
Sir Brice fol-
lows them—
Shuts door
and goes up
C.*

SIR BRICE.

Now, will you let us understand each other once for all?

¹ *Dulcie goes down R. and sits on sofa.*

[DULCIE enters, looks at him without speaking.¹]

SIR BRICE.

I want some money. This fellow Remon has offered you his purse to any extent. Get a few hundreds for me to go on with.

DUL.

No.

SIR BRICE.

You won't? Then why did you begin to take his money?²

² *Sits R. of table.*

DUL.

Because I was weak, because you bullied me, and because I knew I was welcome.³

³ *Crosses R. sits on sofa.*

SIR BRICE.

Very good. The same reasons continue. You're weak, I'm a bully, and you're welcome. Aren't you welcome, eh? Aren't you welcome?

DUL.

I believe I am welcome to every penny he has in the world.

SIR BRICE.

He loves you?

DUL.

Yes.

SIR BRICE.

And you love him?

DUL.

[Looking straight at SIR BRICE very fearlessly and calmly.] With all my heart.

SIR BRICE.

And you aren't ashamed to tell me?

DUL.

Is there anything in your past life that you have taken the trouble to hide from me? * Have you ever openly or secretly had an attachment to any living creature that does you as much credit and so little shame as my love for David Remon does to me?

* Call Blanchflower.

SIR BRICE.

All right. Go on loving him. You needn't hesitate. He expects a fair exchange—if he hasn't already got it.

DUL.

[*Very calmly.*] That's a lie, and you know it is.

SIR BRICE.

Very well. It's a lie. I don't care one way or the other. Get me some money.

DUL.

You have had the last farthing that you will ever touch of David Remon's money.

SIR BRICE.

All right. [*Jumps up very determinedly.*] Then you've seen the last you will see of your child for some years to come.¹

¹ Moves L.

DUL.

[*Aroused.*] What! you will hit me through my child!²

² Rises.

SIR BRICE.

I think *my* child's health requires a change for a few years—a different climate from you and myself.³ We will go upon a little tour by ourselves, shall we? to—where the devil shall we go? I don't care. I shall send Rosy away to-morrow morning. D'ye hear.⁴

³ Returns to her.

DUL.

⁴ Crosses to door L.

I hear.

SIR BRICE.

If I don't see you again to-night, get her ready by to-morrow morning. [Exit. L.]

DUL.

[*Stands for a moment or two quiet, then bursts into a fit of ironic laughter.*] Nell! [*Goes to the door at back, calls out.*] Nell! Nell! Come here!¹

[HELEN enters C.]

HELEN.

What's the matter?²

DUL.

Nell, old girl, have you got such a thing as a Church Service about you?

HELEN.

Church Service?

DUL.

I want you to tell me the end and meaning of marriage. There's something about it in the Church Service, isn't there? I did go through it once, I know, but I've forgotten what it's all about. *What does it mean?*

HELEN.

Marriage?

DUL.

Yes. Oh, I know! It's one of Mr. Remon's games.

HELEN.

Games?¹

DUL.

Yes. He says men and women are playing a lot of queer games on earth that they call religion, love, politics, and this and that and the other—marriage must be one, and it's the funniest of them all! It's a two-handed game like—like cribbage, or tossing up. You choose your partner—head's he's a good 'un, then you're in clover; tails he's a bad 'un, then, it's purgatory and inferno for you for the rest of your

⁵ Goes down R. of table and sits.

⁶ Moves down R. of her.

¹ Sitting on sofa.

life, unless you're a man. It's all right if you're a man. The same game as before, choose your partner—heads she's a good 'un, then you're in clover; tails she's a bad 'un, then you cut her, and toss up again and again, until you do get a good 'un. That's the game—that's the game—and it's a splendid game for a man.

[BLANCHFLOWER, in evening dress, pops in L.]

BLAN.

How d'ye do, Lady Skene? Am I in the way, eh?

DUL.

Enter! Enter! Enter! You're just in time. Help us solve this mighty question.

BLAN.

Something important, eh? ¹

DUL.

No, only marriage.

BLAN.

What about it?

DUL.

Well—what about it? Give us your opinion. There's something mystical about it, isn't there? Nell, where's that Church Service? Something mystical?

BLAN.

Well, yes; and—hum? eh? [*happy thought*]*—something ideal—*

DUL.

Mystical and ideal. Go on, Nell.

HELEN.

I'd rather not. I don't like to hear you mocking at marriage.

DUL.

[*Laughing.*] Mocking at marriage! Oh, my God! is it women who have married bad men that mock at

¹ Sits L. of table.

* Call. David, Eddie, Servant.

marriage Make haste, make haste! [*Dashing her hands on the chair.*] Marriage is a mystical, ideal state—isn't there something in the Service about physical? Go on, Nell, go on—help us out. Go on! What have we left out?

HELEN.

The wife's duty.

DUL.

Yat. Yah. Yah.

[*This is very quiet and calm, with a pause between each Yah, very different from the excited Yah! Yah! Yah! of the second Act.*]

HELEN.

To her husband to keep her vows. To herself to keep herself pure and stainless, because it is her glory, as it is a man's glory to be brave and honest.

DUL.

[*Same position, same tone.*] Yah. Yah. Yah.

HELEN.

And to society, to her nation, because no nation has ever survived whose women have been immoral.

DUL.

[*Suddenly springing up, sitting up upright in the chair.*] And the men?

HELEN.

I don't know whether it's a man's duty to be moral. I'm sure it's a woman's.

DUL.

Oh, then marriage is a moral state, eh—at least for women, eh, Mr. Blanchflower?

BLAN.

[*Who has shown symptoms of great discomfort through the interview.*] Ye—es—decidedly marriage is—or—a—should be a moral state.

DUL.

[*Jumping up vigorously.*] Ah, now we've got it! Now we can go ahead! Marriage is a physical, mystical, ideal, moral game. Oh, I hate these words, moral, ideal.¹ How if it isn't ideal? Suppose it's horribly, horribly real! How if it isn't moral? Suppose it's horribly, horribly immoral! Moral! Moral!! Moral!!! Is there anything under God's sun so immoral, ah—guess it—guess it—to be married to a man one hates! And you go on plastering it and poulticing it and sugaring it over with “moral” and “ideal” and respectable,” and all those words that men use to cheat themselves with. It isn't moral to be married to a man one hates! It isn't ideal! It isn't mystical! It's hateful! It's martyrdom! [*A long pause.*]²

¹ *Moves up to chair, front of fire.*

² *Helen rises and goes to window.*

BLAN.

[*Calm, with a real touch of feeling.*] My dear Lady Skene, I won't pretend to offer you advice——

DUL.

[*Has recovered from her outburst, now speaks in a very calm, indifferent, matter-of-fact tone.*] It doesn't matter. You're going to the ball?³

³ *Returns to C.*

BLAN.

I was going—but if I can help you in any way—— [*Struck with the idea.*] My uncle, Canon Butterfield, is here for the winter. He suffers from liver, and has written a book on Socinianism. If you want any spiritual advice, I'm sure you couldn't do better.

DUL.

What is Socinianism? Is it anything to do with marriage?

BLAN.

Well—ah—no. Shall I send him?

DUL.

No, I won't trouble you. I'll think this out for myself.

BLAN.

Well, if you ever do need a clergyman, don't forget my uncle. You can't do better. Or if at any time I can be of any use——

DUL.

Thank you. Good-night.

BLAN.

[*Shaking hands very sympathetically.*] Good-bye.
[*Exit. L.*]

DUL.

[*Suddenly.*] Nell! [*HELEN comes to her.*] Take Rosy up at once, dress her, get out of the hotel by the servants' way so that you don't meet Sir Brice—take her over to Beaulieu to the Hôtel des Anglais, and wait there till to-morrow morning. I'll send you a message what to do.

Servant enters, announces MR. REMON—MR. EDWARD REMON. Enter DAVID and EDDIE, still in PIERROT's dress. HELEN shows some surprise.
[*Exit Servant.*]

DUL.

Quick, Nell, do as I tell you.

HELEN.

[*Looking at DAVID and EDDIE.*] Promise me——

DUL.

What?

HELEN.

You'll take no step till you've seen me.

DUL.

I promise. Make haste. Come here and tell me when Rosy's ready.

HELEN.

[Comes to DAVID, shakes hands with him.] You heard her promise.

DAVID.

She shall keep it. [Exit HELEN at back.]

EDDIE.

I've brought him, Lady Skene. I'm off to the ball. I'm not so tipsy now as I was, but I'm going to have my fling. It's my only chance of going to the devil. Davy, where shall I meet you? ¹

¹ Goes to door
L.

DAVID.

I'll come to the Opera House for you. Wait for me there.

EDDIE.

Come as soon as you can, won't you? You come too, Lady Skene. You can't think how jolly it is to have no duty and no conscience and no faith and no future, no anything but pleasure and life! Do come! Let's all be fools for once in our lives! Let's be monkeys again! Come on! Come on!

[Exit, L. As soon as he has gone, DAVID and DULCIE, who have been standing on opposite sides of the room, go to each other very calmly. They meet in the middle of the room, take each other's hands. He raises hers to his lips. DAVID's appearance has changed since the last Act; he is more worn and spiritual, a little greyer, very calm at first, an unearthly look in his face. They stand looking at each other for some moments.]

DUL.

You're changed! You're not well!

DAVID.

Quite well. So well, I feel no ill can ever happen to me.

DUL.

Why did you not come to me before?

DAVID.

I'd been able to do you a service. I didn't wish you to think that I had any claim on you.

DUL.

Ah, you shouldn't misunderstand me. I could never misunderstand you like that. I've taken your money. I knew I was welcome, because—if I were rich and you were poor, I would give you all I had.

DAVID.

Ah! Take all I have!

DUL.

Not another farthing.

DAVID.

Why not?

DUL.

I would be proud to owe all my happiness, all my comfort to you. I have been proud these last six months to think that my child's very bread came from you.

DAVID.

Ah! [*Coming nearer to her.*]

DUL.

I would only have taken just sufficient for necessities—but he forced me. I was weak. Now the end has come. I won't waste any more of your money in this [*pointing to the cards*] and racing, and—I don't know what.¹

DAVID.

Tell it all.

DUL.

Things can't go on as they are. [*Smiling.*] Do you remember the Scotchman who lost his mother-in-law

¹ Moves R. to sofa. David follows her. Dulcie sits.

and his aunt and three cousins, all in one epidemic? He said it was "just reedeeclous." Things are "just reedeeclous" with me. [*Laughing.*] Sir Brice has threatened to take Rosy away from me.

DAVID.

No! ¹

¹ *Sits R. G.*

DUL.

Yes! I'm sending Nell to Beaulieu with her tonight. I don't know what will happen. I don't think I care much. It doesn't matter. Nothing matters. [*Smiling. Then with sudden alarm.*] Yes—this journey of yours to Africa. Must you go?

DAVID.

I must. I've been waiting for years for this chance. If I succeed, it will crown all my life's work.

DUL.

But it's dangerous.

DAVID.

I take a doctor and drugs. Besides, I bear a charmed life.*

* *Call Sir Brice.*

DUL.

But this fever,—Eddie says it is deadly.

DAVID.

[*With great calmness, looking away.*] It will pass me. But if it kills me I must go.

DUL.

No, no, no.

DAVID.

Yes, yes, yes. I'm pledged. All my world, the little world that takes an interest in me, is watching me. There's the hope of a great prize. It's my one chance of snatching the poor little laurel-wreath that we mortals call immortality.

DUL.

But can't you go some other time?

DAVID.

I must be at my post, especially as it is a little dangerous,—that makes it the post of honour. I've delayed everything till the last moment that I might be near you till the very end.

DUL.

The end! Then this is the end? I shall never see you again.

DAVID.

Yes. When I return.

DUL.

[*Shaking her head.*] You will not return. [*Looking at him very keenly and closely.*] Tell me, in your heart of hearts do you not know that you will never come back?

[DAVID is about to speak.]

DUL.

Ah no—tell me the truth!

DAVID.

[*Slowly and fatefully.*] I wonder how it is that when one has carefully weeded out all the old superstitions from one's mind, a crop of new superstitions springs up more foolish than the old ones. I've lived up there so long I've grown morbid. I've an attack of the silliest form of superstition—a presentiment.

DUL.

Ah, I knew it!

DAVID.

In six months I shall laugh at it.¹ We will laugh at it together.

DUL.

[*Determinedly.*] You shall not go!

¹ *Rises—Goes*
L. C. Dulcie
rises.

DAVID.

I must. I'm working with my comrades all over the world. I've undertaken this part of the work. If I don't carry it out I break faith with them and spoil their work too.¹ All the good fellows who are going with me and sharing in my dangers are waiting for me at Marseilles. I can't leave them in the lurch—I can't—you would not have me do it! Say you wouldn't have me stamp myself a coward, a deserter.

¹ Returns c.

DUL.

No, no. But I don't want you to go. [*Approaching him.*] If I asked you to stay——

DAVID.

You will not—[*Going towards her.*] You will not [*a little nearer*] ask me to stay. [*She looks at him—gradually they go closer to each other, and his manner changes from a calm, dreamy, fateful tone to a fierce, hoarse, passionate tone.*] Do you know what it means if I stay? Dulcie!

DUL.

You never called me that before.

DAVID.

[*Clasping her.*] I've never been so near to you. Dulcie! [*With sudden, mad abandonment, clasping her passionately.*] Yes, I'll stay! I'll stay! Tell me to stay because—because—you love me.

DUL.

Stay—because—ah, you know I love you!

DAVID.

Eddie's right. Let's be fools to-night! Let's live to-night! I'm hungry for you! Dulcie, tell me once again that you love me.

DUL.

No—no. Forget it. What have I said? What shall we do?

DAVID.

I don't know. What does it matter? We will go to this ball—anything—anywhere! Our lives are in our own hands. Come with me.

SIR BRICE *enters* L. *He shuts the door, stands against it, his feet a little sprawling, his hands in his pockets, looking at them maliciously. Long pause. HELEN enters at the other door. Another pause. She beckons* DULCIE.

HELEN.

Dulcie! [*Indicates the inside room. DULCIE goes up to her.*]

[*Exit HELEN. C. DULCIE at the door looks at the two men. Exit DULCIE. The two men are left alone. Another slight pause. SIR BRICE walks very deliberately up to DAVID. The two men stand close to each other for a moment or two.*]

SIR BRICE.

You've come to settle your little account, I suppose?

DAVID.

I owe you nothing.

SIR BRICE.

But I owe you six thousand pounds. I haven't a penny in the world. I'll cut you for it, double or quits.

DAVID.

I don't play cards.

SIR BRICE.

You'd better begin.

[*Rapping on the table with the cards.*]

DAVID.

[*Very firmly.*] I don't play cards with you.

SIR BRICE.

And I say you shall.

DAVID.

[*Very stern and contemptuous.*] I don't play cards with you.

[*Going towards door.*]

SIR BRICE.

You refuse? ¹

DAVID.

I refuse.

SIR BRICE.

Once for all, will you give me a chance of paying back the six thousand pounds that Lady Skene has borrowed from you? Yes or no?

DAVID.

No.

SIR BRICE.

No?

DAVID.

[*Very emphatically.*] No. [*Goes to door, suddenly turns round, comes up to him.*] Yes. [*Comes to the table.*] I do play cards with you. You want my money. Very well. I'll give you a chance of winning all I have in the world.

SIR BRICE.

[*After a look of astonishment.*²] Good. I'm your man. Any game you like, and any stakes.

DAVID.

[*Very calm, cold, intense tone all through.*] The stakes on my side are some two hundred thousand pounds. The stakes on your side are—your wife and child.

SIR BRICE.

[*Taken aback.*] My wife and child!

DAVID.

Your wife and child. Come—begin! [*Points to the cards.*]

¹ Standing R.
of table.

² Over table.

SIR BRICE.

[*Getting flurried.*] My wife and child? [*Puts his hands restlessly through his hair, looks intently at* DAVID. *Pause.*] All right. [*Pause. Cunningly.*] I value my wife and child very highly.

DAVID.

I value them at all I have in the world. [*Pointing to cards.*] Begin! ¹

¹ *Sweeps cards from table.*

SIR BRICE.

You seem in a hurry.

DAVID.

I believe I haven't six months to live. I want to make the most of those six months. If I have more I want to make the most of all the years. Begin! ²

² *Breaks pack.*

SIR BRICE.

[*Wipes his face with his handkerchief.*] This is the first time I've played this game. We'd better arrange conditions.

DAVID.

There's only one condition. We play till I'm beggared of every farthing I have, or till you're beggared of them. Sit down!

SIR BRICE.

[*Sits down.*] Very well. [*Pause.*] What game? ³

³ *Breaks pack.*

DAVID.

The shortest.

SIR BRICE.

Simple cutting?

DAVID.

What you please. Begin!

SIR BRICE.

There's no hurry. I mean to have a night's fun out of this. ⁴

⁴ *Shuffles.*

DAVID.

Look at me. Don't trifle with me! I want to have done with you. I want them to have done with you. I want to get them away from you. Quick! I want to know now—now—this very moment—whether they are yours or mine. Begin.¹

¹ Puts cards on table.

SIR BRICE.

[*Shuffles the cards.*] All right. What do we cut for?

DAVID.

Let one cut settle it.

SIR BRICE.

No. It's too much to risk on one throw.

DAVID.

One cut. Begin.

SIR BRICE.

It's too big. I can't.² I like high play, but that's too high for me. [DAVID remains at table, very calm; does not stir all through the scene;³ SIR BRICE walking about.] No, by Jove! I'll tell you what I'll do. Three cuts out of five. Damn it all! I'm game! Two out of three. By Jove, two out of three! Will that do?

² Rises—goes down L. and back.

³ David L. of table. Sir Brice R. of table.

DAVID.

So be it! Sit down! Shuffle.

[SIR BRICE sits down; begins shuffling the cards. All through the scene he is nervous, excited, hysterical, laughing. DAVID as cold as a statue.⁴]

⁴ David sits L. of table.

SIR BRICE.

[*Having shuffled.*] Now then. Who cuts first? [The two men stare fixedly at each other.]

[DULCIE enters at back.]

DUL.

[*Surprised.*] Mr. Remon! No! No! Not that! Not that!

DAVID.

[*Coming down, warning her off with a motion of his hand.*] If you please. Stand aside for a moment.
[*Offers the cards to SIR BRICE to cut.*]

SIR BRICE.

Ace counts lowest.

DAVID.

As you will. Cut. [SIR BRICE cuts.]

SIR BRICE.

King! By Jove! King! Cut! [DAVID cuts.]

SIR BRICE.

¹ Sweeps cards
from table.

Nine! ¹ One to me! By Jove! one to me! [To DULCIE.] Give us up some of those cards, will you?

[DAVID *by a gesture stops her; takes up the pack that SIR BRICE has broken and shuffles them.*]

SIR BRICE.

Shuffle up. By Jove! if I win——

DUL.

Mr. Remon, you'll not play any more?

DAVID.

[*Very gently.*] Stand aside, please.

SIR BRICE.

No. Let her shuffle for us. She's in it, isn't she?

DUL.

What do you mean? What are you playing for?

SIR BRICE.

You'd like to know, would you? What are we playing for? I'll tell you. We're playing for you and your child! *

* Red light—
Warn curtain.

DUL.

[*Suddenly.*] What? [*Shows great horror and astonishment.*] Mr. Remon! It's not so? It's not so?
[*To DAVID.*] What are you playing for?

DAVID.

He has said. For you and your child. If I win, will you abide by the bargain? [*Very long pause—she looks from one to the other.*]

DUL.

Yes.

DAVID.

[*Puts cards on table.*] Cut.

[*They both shuffle cards.*]

SIR BRICE.

[*Very excited, laughing, nervous.*] You've got to win both now. You know that?

DAVID.

I know.

SIR BRICE.

[*Cuts.*] Ten. Not bad. You've got to beat it. Cut!

[*DAVID cuts.*]

SIR BRICE.

Queen! One each!¹ Now for the final, d'ye hear? This is final. If I win—[*Walking about excitedly; pours out a glass of brandy—drinks.*] I'll cut first! No! Damn it all! you cut first! [*Holding cards. DAVID cuts.*] Six. [*To DAVID, suddenly.*] Suppose I win—you'll pay me? You mean to pay me?

DAVID.

I shall pay you every farthing.

SIR BRICE.

What security do you give me?

¹ *Sweeps cards from table. David breaks another pack, shuffles and puts them on table.*

DAVID.

My word in the presence of the woman I love.

SIR BRICE.

[*Walks about.*] Let me be a moment.²

DAVID.

Cut.

SIR BRICE.

[*To DULCIE.*] You're anxious, are you? I'm going to win! I mean it! I'm going to win! [*To DAVID.*] Now! [*DAVID holds cards; SIR BRICE cuts.*] My God! I've lost!³

DAVID.

[*Throws down the card-table; leaps at him; catches hold of him by the throat.*] Yes, you've lost! She's mine! [*Gets him down on his knees.*] You've cheated me of her all these years! You've cheated me of her love, cheated me of the fatherhood of her child, you've dragged her down, you've dishonoured her! She's my wife now—my wife and child! Take your oath you'll never lay claim to them again! Swear it! [*Shaking him.*]

SIR BRICE.

She's yours! Take her! I'll never see her or her child again! I swear it! Take them!

DAVID.

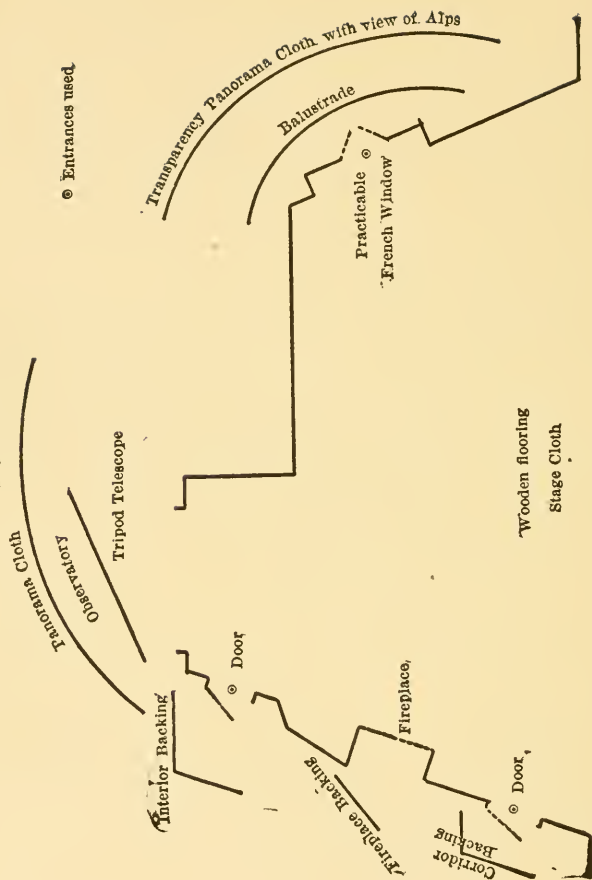
Dare to break your word—dare to lay a finger on her or her child—dare to show your face in the home that my love shall give to her—and whatever laws men have made to bind you and her together, I'll break them and rid her of you! D'ye hear? She's mine! She's mine! She's mine! [*Throws SIR BRICE back on the floor. To DULCIE.*] My wife! My child! Come! You're mine! [*DAVID seizes DULCIE in his arms and falls against L. door. Curtain begins to descend when SIR BRICE thrown down.*]

² *Sir Brice rises, moves chair, then goes to small table R. and drinks brandy.*

³ *Sinks into chair.*

THE MASQUERADERS

SCENE GROUND PLAN ACT IV



ACT IV.

SCENE—*The Observatory on Mount Garidelli in the Maritime Alps, near Nice.*

A door, right. A large fireplace, with pine cones and pine logs ready laid, above door, right. At the back, seen through a large curtained doorway, is the circular Observatory with large telescope. This room is vaguely seen, the telescope being lighted by a shaft of moonlight at the beginning of the Act. On the left side, slant-wise, a large window, with terrace outside, giving scenery of the Maritime Alps. A large armchair above the fireplace. On table and scattered about the room are a number of scientific books and astronomical instruments and apparatus. The window is curtained with Eastern curtains. As curtain rises the whole scene is dark except for the shaft of moonlight that falls on the telescope.

[Enter DAVID and DULCIE.¹]

DAVID.

Come in! Come to your home! My wife!

DUL.

[*Cold, shuddering.*] Ah no—don't call me that—at least not yet.

DAVID.

You're shivering! Let me give you some wine.

[*Goes to cupboard, brings out bottle and glass, which he fills, places them on table.*]

¹ David comes on from R. door, carrying lighted lantern which he hangs on a hook C. Takes off hat and cloak and puts them on a chair up L., returns to door and leads in Dulcie.

DUL.

No, no, tell me——[*Goes to him, looks into his face.*]

DAVID.

[*With great tenderness.*] Dulcie! Dulcie! What is it, dear? How cold you are. I'll light the fire. [*Lights fire, which is already laid with large pine cones and logs and quickly blazes up.**] I'm your servant now. I've nothing to do all my life but wait on you. We shall soon have a blaze with these pine logs. My servants left me last night. I thought I should have no further use for them. I thought my life here was ended. Ended! My life has only begun this last hour. [*Clasping her.*] Dulcie! Do you know where you are? You are in your home. Take off your hat and cloak, dear. [*Gently removes her cloak and puts it on chair.†*] There! [*Seats her at the fire in large chair.*] This is your own hearth, dear, your own fireside. You are my bride! No bride was ever so welcome as you.¹ Poor hands so cold. [*Takes her hands in his, rubs them; as he does so they both at one moment see her wedding-ring.* DULCIE *withdraws her hand in shame. They look at each other horrified. A pause.*] Give me your hand.

[*She holds it out. He takes off the ring, goes to window, draws aside the curtains, opens window, throws away the ring, comes back to her. The dawn outside begins and gradually rises into a full sunrise during progress of Act.‡*]

DUL.

[*As he returns to her.*] Oh, you'll be very kind to me?

DAVID.

I have no life, no ambition away from you. The world has gone from me. This journey to Africa—it was the object of my life—it's less than nothing to me now.¹ I've thrown it away, I've forgotten it, because you asked me.

* As fire burns up, one amber line comes on from L. shelf, and one from fire-place; both shine on arm-chair.

† Floats slowly up.

¹ Kneels L. of her.

‡ When curtains are drawn battens and pros. gradually up.

¹ Moves R. of her and kneels.

DUL.

Ah no, you mustn't do that. Oh, I'm selfish to take you from your comrades, from your work. You must go and make this great discovery.

DAVID.

I've made the one great discovery there was to make. It's the cunningest of them all. We astronomers have been puzzling all our lives to find out what gravitation is. I've found it out. Gravitation is love. It's love that holds together all this universe. It's love that drives every little atom in space to rush to every other little atom. There's love at the centre of the system. There's love at the centre of all things. No astronomer ever made a discovery equal to that! Dulcie, look at me! What ails you? What are you thinking of? *

DUL.

Nell and Rosy. They'll be here soon.

DAVID.

Yes. They can't be long. Don't think of them. Think only of ourselves.

DUL.

Why wouldn't you come with me to Beaulieu and bring them up here?

DAVID.

I was afraid your sister would take you from me. I wanted to have you all to myself. When she comes here I wanted her to find you already in your home.

DUL.

It's so strange.

DAVID.

What is strange?

DUL.

To be here with you—alone.

DAVID.

It's not strange to me. You've been here so often

* *times before
and behind
transpar-
ency slowly
change from
blue to rose.*

already. In my loneliness I've pictured you here hundreds of times. I at my work in there, you in this chair by the fire, Rosy playing about the floor.

DUL.¹

Rosy.

DAVID.

She is my child now, as you are my wife.² Dulcie, say you know we have done right.

DUL.

[*Distracted.*] Right! Yes—yes—I suppose so! What else could we do? What else could I do!

DAVID.

Say you know we have done *right*.

DUL.

Yes—yes—I can't think now. [*Returning and throwing her arms round him.*] I only know I love you.

DAVID.

[*Clasping her madly.*] Dulcie, this is your home, this is our wedding-day. My bride!

DUL.

[*Tearing herself from him.**] No, no—not now—not yet! My promise to Nell—I promised her I would take no step till I had seen her.

DAVID.

[*Pursuing her, fiercely clasping her.*] You've taken the step. You're mine——

DUL.

No, no. [*Repulsing him again.*] Let me think. Wait till Nell comes. Ah, don't think I don't love you. There's nothing I wouldn't do or suffer for you. There's not a thought in my heart that isn't yours. Say you know it! Say you know it!

DAVID.

I know it. What then? Tell me what's in your heart.

¹ Gets up and goes c.

² Rises.

* Call Eddie, Helen.

DUL.

I can't. Can't you guess? ¹¹ Moves L. C.

DAVID.

Guess—what?

DUL.

Oh, it was horrible with him. There was no home, no family, no love. It seemed like a blasphemy of home to live with him. But this—I can't tell you how I feel—I don't think any man can understand it. It's only a woman, and not all women—not many women perhaps—but I feel it. I can't get rid of it. To live with you seems more horrible than the other. I cannot! I cannot! I cannot!

DAVID.

[*Very calmly, very sweetly, very soothingly.*] Dearest, you mustn't talk like this. Heaven bear me witness you will come to me as pure as if I took you from your mother's side, as pure as if you had never known any kiss but your sister's.

[*Attempting to embrace her.*]

DUL.

Ah! [*Shrinking from him.*] Don't I tell you, a man can't understand my feelings.

[*Looks at him half-loving, half-horrified; stands looking at him. A little pause.*]

DAVID.²

[*Same soft, tender tone, very persuasive, very low, very sweet.*] Dulcie, in a very little while you will grow to think of me as if I were your very husband—as I shall be; and with you, and your sister, and Eddie, and Rosy, we shall make one happy, one united family.

[*Approaching her.*]² Crossing to her and getting L. of her.

DUL.

Ah! that's it. I feel——

DAVID.

[*Clasping her again.*] What?

DUL.

¹ *Going R.*

We can't be a family that way. There's only one way of being a family.¹

DAVID.

And that?

DUL.

By the marriage and love of husband and wife.

DAVID.

It is marriage I offer you. Dulcie, you must see there's no future for you away from me. Say you'll give yourself to me willingly. [*Pause.*] I will not take you else. Give yourself to me!

DUL.

[*After a pause.*] I am yours.

DAVID.

No. Give yourself to me—wholly, freely, willingly.

DUL.

Oh! don't you see? I would give you myself—a thousand selves if I could. What is there in me that is worth giving, or worth your taking now?

DAVID.

Everything, everything. Give yourself to me!

DUL.

If I give you myself I give you the last four years with me. They are part of me. I shall only feel that I can never get rid of them. I cannot get rid of them. Every time you kiss me I shall see him beside us! I cannot! I cannot! I cannot! I cannot! [*Pause. EDDIE looks in at window.**]

* *Limes slowly change from rose to amber everything goes full up.*

EDDIE.

Ho, ho, Davy! Ho, ho! Here we are!

DUL.

[*Goes to window, goes up to him.*] My sister and Rosy, are they with you?

EDDIE.

[*Pointing down below.*] Quite safe. Here they are. Look alive, Davy! We've no time to waste. I shall be ready in a twinkling. I'm half a fool, and half a wise man just now. In two minutes I shall be in my right senses—or in as many as I've got—and then——

[*Passes by.*¹]¹ Off up L.

DAVID.

[*To DULCIE.*] Dulcie, your sister is here. Tell her that henceforth you are my wife.

DUL.

I am your slave, your dog, your anything!² Take me if you will—take me! But kill me after. If you don't I shall kill myself.

² Goes c. David clasps her in his arms. At end of speech, she staggers back from him.

[*HELEN enters at door, R. stands for a moment looking at one and then at the other.*]

HELEN.

Dulcie. [*DULCIE goes to her, saying, "Nell."*]

DUL.

Rosy—where is she?³

³ David moves L.

HELEN.

[*Pointing off.*] She's there. [*DULCIE is going. HELEN stops her.*] Let me look at you. [*DULCIE looks frankly at her. HELEN smiles, kisses her.*] Go to your baby. [*Exit DULCIE. HELEN shuts the door after DULCIE.*] You've taken her from him?

[*DAVID nods.*]

HELEN.

For good and all?

DAVID.

For good and all.

HELEN.

Why have you brought her here?

DAVID.

To make her my wife.

HELEN.

Your wife? That is impossible unless——

DAVID.

Unless?

HELEN.

Unless her husband divorces her and takes her child from her.

DAVID.

I've won her from him, her and the child. Don't come between us. Give them to me!¹

¹ Goes C.

HELEN.

[*Stops him.*] She is not mine to give. She is not yours to take. Your brother tells me you're going on this expedition to Africa this morning.

DAVID.

I'm not going.

HELEN.

Not going? But you have looked forward to it all your life!

DAVID.

I've wasted all my life in such dreams and shadows as work and duty. What has it availed me? Now I see one chance of happiness before me, don't take it from me!² Give them to me! [*She stops him.*] I will have them!

² Moves to her. Eddie calls off, "Davy!" then enters up R. David goes L.

[*EDDIE enters dressed ready to start.*]

EDDIE.

³ Eddie goes to chair up L., and puts cloak on it.

Davy, old boy, look alive! The men have got everything on the mules. We've not a moment to waste.³

DAVID.

I'm not going.

EDDIE.

Not going? But they are all waiting for us.¹ If we don't go, all the expeditions everywhere will be a failure. Davy, you aren't going to sell them all like a—like a—They'll call you a—will, you fill in the word.

DAVID.

I'm not going.

EDDIE.

But what excuse can we make?

DAVID.

Any excuse you like—I've changed my mind.²

HELEN.

[*With quiet sarcasm.*] Is that a good excuse for a soldier to make just as he's ordered into battle?

DAVID.

I'm not a soldier.

HELEN.

Yes, you are. We are all soldiers on this earth, bound to be loyal to every one of our comrades, bound to obey the great rules of life, whether they are easy or hard. Yes, and all the more bound when they are hard, when they may cost us our very life. You'll go—you'll go, and leave her to me and Rosy?

DAVID.

I love her! I love her!

HELEN.

Then save her for her child. Save her to be a good mother to that little helpless creature she has brought into the world, so that when her girl grows up and she has to guide her, she'll not have to say to her child, "You can give yourself to this man, and if you don't like him you can give yourself to another, and to

¹ *Moves down to David, and speaks very earnestly, afterwards moves up and stands on balcony outside window L.*

² *Going c.*

another, and so on. It doesn't matter. It was what I did!"

DAVID.

[*Same tone.*] I love her! I love her! I love her! You shan't reason me out of my happiness!

HELEN.

[*Stopping him.*] I can't reason at all. I can only feel, and I know my instinct is right. I know the woman who gives herself to another man while her husband is alive betrays her sex, and is a bad woman.

DAVID.

I love her! I love her! [*Going towards door.*]

HELEN.

[*Stopping him.*] Then make your love the best thing in her life, and the best thing in yours. You have loved her so well. You have made so many sacrifices for her. Make this one last sacrifice. Keep her pure for her child.*¹

* Red light to curtain.

¹ David remains C., back to audience. Eddie watches from window.

EDDIE.

That's God's voice speaking to you now, Davy.

[*DULCIE enters R. very quietly, looking off.*

DUL.

[*To DAVID.*] She's asleep. Go and look at her.

[*Exit DAVID, R. DULCIE is about to follow. HELEN stops her.*]

HELEN.

Dulcie.

DUL.

² Goes to her.

What?²

HELEN.

He's given his word to his comrades. Don't make him play the coward.³

³ Dulcie goes L. C. Helen goes to fireplace.

[*DAVID re-enters, much calmer.*]

DAVID.

Miss Larondie, I'll write to you from Marseilles. I have left everything in order for her. If by any chance I should not return——

DUL.

Ah! [*Goes to him.*]

DAVID.

Take care of her while I'm away.

DUL.

But if you do not return?

DAVID.

[*Very calm, very bitter, very tender, with a little smile.*] Then—we shall have played our parts well in this little puppet-show, shall we not? Don't cry, my dear, why should you? If I were a soldier, you would tell me to go. We shall not be absent from each other long. Don't cry, dear. It's my duty to go, Dulcie. Be brave. Tell me to go.

DUL.

[*Bows her head.*] Go. Go.¹

DAVID.

[*Going from her some steps.*] I've played this great game of love like a fool, as men would say. Perhaps I've played the great game of life like a fool, too. If we are sacrificing ourselves for a shadow we are only doing what earth's best creatures have done before us. If duty is reality, we have done right. Right—wrong—duty—they may be all shadows, but my love for you is real. [DULCIE *is sobbing, he comes to her.*] Hush! Hush, dear! We shall never know satiety. Our love will never grow stale and commonplace, will it? Dulcie, we've only thrown away the husks. We've kept the immortal part of our love—if there is an immortal part. Look! this is my mother's wedding ring. [*Taking a very thin*

¹ *She turns her back to audience and leans against chair. David crosses front of her, as if to go to window; then turns to her.*

gold ring from his little finger.] She gave it to me as she was dying. It has never left my finger since. I give it you in exchange for the one I took from you. Give me your hand. [DULCIE gives it.] With this ring I thee wed. As she that bore me was pure, so I leave you pure, dear. Kiss me once—I've held you sacred! [She kisses him.] Good-bye. No, stay.¹ [Pours out a glass of wine, gives it to her.] Drink with me. [She takes the glass, drinks some of it. He takes it from her, drains it, dashes the glass on the floor, where it is shivered to atoms; he then turns very brightly and gaily to EDDIE.] Now Eddie—our work!

¹ Takes glass of wine he has previously poured out and left on table up L. and gives it to her.

EDDIE.

Ready, big brother!²

² Eddie hands cloak.

DAVID.

[To DULCIE.] In six months from now, come to meet me, my wife, and bring our child. Or, it may be a little later—but come and meet me—my wife—a little later.

DUL.

Where?

DAVID.

In that little star in Andromeda. All's real there.

[Exeunt EDDIE and DAVID through window.]

CURTAIN.

If curtain is called up, show a picture of DAVID outside the window, in the full morning sunlight, the mountains covered with snow behind him; EDDIE is beside him drawing him away.

ACT I.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION—Thirty-eight minutes.

HAND PROPERTIES.—Claret-tray, and glasses; pocketbook and stamps for Brinkler; key and glass cloth for Dulcie; candle for Remon; cooper's mallet for Randall.

FURNITURE.—Small rustic table and two chairs L.C.; long table, form, and chairs R.; barrel and stool up L.C.; form up C.; table and form chairs in back room.

OTHER PROPERTIES.—Writing materials and railway guides outside bar; "Sporting Times" and matches on R. table; bottle of gin, water jug, glasses, pewter, etc., inside bar; newspapers on L. C. table; candlestick, etc., in further room; bell hanging L.; appropriate articles to dress scene.

LIGHT.—Everything full up during act; tee-pendant in bar; burners and consumers over doors and openings; chandelier in room up C.; two amber limes L. shelf; ditto R.; four other limes, one R. fly, one L. fly, two outside gates.

ACT II.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION—Thirty-two minutes.

HAND PROPERTIES.—Wedding ring for Dulcie; coins for Sir Brice.

FURNITURE USED.—Sofa R.C., small table R. of it; sofa up L.; chair down L.; basket chairs off C.

OTHER PROPERTIES.—Flowers, palms, ornaments, etc.

LIGHTS.—Everything full up during Act; lighted sconces and chandeliers; two amber limes L.; shelf ditto R. shelf; one off down L.; ditto up R.; two blue limes off C.; change to yellow at cue.

ACT III.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION—Twenty-eight minutes.

HAND PROPERTIES.—Salver and letter for servant.

FURNITURE USED.—Sofa R. small table above it; armchair front of fireplace; writing desk and chair up L.; chair down L.; card table C., armchair either side of it; dressing-table and chair off up C.; cabinet off L.; carpets, rugs, etc.

OTHER PROPERTIES.—Decanters and glasses, bell push L.; loose cards on floor and table, also half dozen broken packs.

LIGHTS.—Everything three-quarters up through act, lighted sconces, fire and chandelier, two pale blue limes off R., one amber lime at fireplace, one open lime behind trans. C., two amber limes L. shelf, ditto R. shelf.

ACT IV.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION.—Fifteen minutes.

HAND PROPERTIES.—Lighted lantern, hat and cloak for David, cloak for Dulcie, rings used this act.

FURNITURE.—Table and chair down L.; table up C.; cupboard up R.C.; table down R.; armchair front by fire; chair up L.

OTHER PROPERTIES.—Decanter and glasses in cupboard, matches on mantel; telescope down L.

LIGHTS.—When curtain rises, everything to be as low as possible, at cues everything to go gradually up, fire ready to be lighted, amber limes L. of shelf, ditto at fireplace, both to come on when fire is lighted; one special blue lime from L. fly to shine on telescope at back; three limes front of transparency, two behind; these change colors at once.

MUSIC.—For rise of curtain to continue till David speaks.

PROPERTY PLOT.

ACT I.

Rustic table L. C. with chair either side. Long plain table R. Chair L. of it, form R. of it. Four chairs and a table in room up C. Form outside window. Three chairs on gallery R. over bar. Wine barrel up L. C., stool beside it. Two pails down L. Shrubs in boxes about Scene. Rope mats at doors. Carpets and rods to stairs. Mats to doors on gallery, curtains to windows. Flower boxes on balustrade, flower-pots over bar. Flags and wreathing hanging from roof. Clock in C. of balcony. Spring bells on Scene L. Special one by staircase. Coaching pasters about Scene. Cards, matches, pipes, etc., on table in further room. Railway guides and subscription lists hanging on bar window. Writing materials and newspapers outside bar. Inside bar, jugs, glasses, pewters, beer engine, men, etc. Matches and "Sporting Times" on R. table. Newspaper on L. C. table. Wedding ring and lighted candle off R. for David. Key and glass cloth for Dulcie. Bottle of claret on cradle. Tray and two glasses for Brinkler; also pocketbook and stamps, handbag for Helen, cooper's mallet in bar for Montague.

ACT II.

Handsome drawing-room furniture, sofa R. C. Small table below it, chair R. of table. Table down R., vase below it, chair above it. Pedestal up R., small cabinet beside it. Pedestal up L., small table beside it. Sofa up L., cabinet behind chair, below two handsome pedestal

lamps R. and L., small table down L. Chair above. Table and settee and piano off L. Table off R. Armchair, two duet seats and small table on balcony C. Palms and floral decorations to lavishly dress Scene. Three handsome hanging baskets of flowers from ceiling. French square C. Rugs to openings. Coffee cups on table up C. Wedding ring for Dulcie. Coins for Sir Brice.

ACT III.

Handsome sitting-room furniture. Sofa R., chair below it, small table above. Armchair and footstool front of fire. Table above it. Writing-desk and chair L. of C. door. Settee up L. Chair down L. Round card-table C. Chair either side. Cabinet off L. Dressing-table, armchair and settee off C. Carpets off C. and off L. Rugs to fireplace, window, and C. door. Carpet square C. Fender and fireirons. Handsome mirror, clock and candelabra on mantelshelf. Palms and flowers on balcony. Decanter and glasses on small table R. Bell push L. of fire. Mirror, hairbrushes, combs, lighted candles, etc., on dressing-table off C. Loose cards on floor and on table, and a half dozen in broken packs. Salver and letter for servant.

ACT IV.

Good plain furniture. Small table down R., ditto above R. door. Armchair front of fire; table above. Cupboard up R. C. Long table up C., chair L. of it. Table and armchair down L. Telescope on tripod L. C. Mariner's compass beside it. Sextant, quadrant, orrery and various astronomical appliances about Scene, also globes, books, maps, charts, etc. Box of matches on mantel, log basket R. of fire. Rugs to hearth and doors and openings. Lighted lantern off R.

SCENE PLOT.

ACT I.

Courtyard of Old Coaching Inn. R. is a built out semicircular bar, with windows, shelves and counter, in the middle of bar is a casement to slide up, a practical half door and a counter flap. Beyond bar narrow door next to which is an opening with corridor backing. At right angles to opening is a short staircase with small platform and dummy door. Above that is another opening. C. is a large bow window beyond which is a bar parlour with door at back. L. of window is a door. And L. of door is an opening. Below that is a short staircase with platform and practical interior backed door. L. of staircase is a narrow opening with steps beside is a booking office, below are two high gates fastened with iron bar supported by stout pillars. A balustraded gallery runs round Scene, and supported by further pillars a glass roof covers the whole courtyard. Leading into gallery are seven doors 3 C., 2 R., 2 L., also there are 6 windows at regular intervals. Behind gallery is a strong platform with practical steps. Sand and stone stage cloth.

ACT II.

Handsome green and gold drawing-room opening with corridor backing up R. Opening with balustrade and illuminated house backing C. Opening with corridor backing down L. Parquet stage cloth, handsome ceiling.

ACT III.

Good papered chamber with plain ceiling to represent sitting-room in French Hotel. Door with corridor backing down L. Door with practical lock C. Beyond it a

dressing-room. Fireplace up R. Down R. are French windows with balustrade and illuminated backing showing seashore at Nice by night.

ACT IV.

Dark wooden chamber with ceiling to match. Door with interior backing down R., above that a built out fireplace, above fireplace a door, At right angles to that an opening showing semicircular observatory with large profile telescope. L. of Scene is a wide opening with French windows outside which are a balustrade and a long panorama transparency showing view of Alps.

GAS AND LIME PLOT.

ACT I.

Chandelier in room up C. Lamp over bar R. Another up stairway L. T pendant and two brackets in bar. Burners over opening R. and door up C. and in room up C. Globes and consumers to same. All of the above to be lighted. Everything except batteries full up during Act. Four amber limes. 2 R. shelf, 2 L. shelf. Four blue limes. 2 outside gateway L., 1 from R. flies, 1 from L. flies.

ACT II.

Lighted Sconces up and down L. Ditto R. Handsome chandelier off L. The whole Scene to be brilliantly illuminated. Six amber limes—2 R. shelf, 2 L. shelf. 1 off up R., 1 off down L. Two blue limes on backing up C. Change at cue to yellow.

ACT III.

Chandelier from ceiling C., sconces up L. and R. and down L. Three light brackets off L. Fire up R. All of

the above to be lighted. Everything to be $\frac{3}{4}$ up during Act. Five amber limes, 2 R. shelf, 2 L. shelf, 1 through fireplace. Two pale blue limes on backing R. One white lime behind transparency up C.

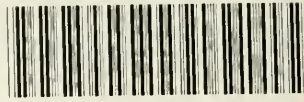
ACT IV.

Log fire R. to be lit at cue. When curtain rises everything to be down as low as possible. At cues everything to go gradually up. Two amber limes, 1 from L. shelf, 1 through fireplace, both to come on slowly when fire burns up. One special blue lime from L. fly to shine on telescope. Three limes in front of panorama cloth and two behind. These must be fitted with long glasses stained blue, red, yellow consecutively to admit of gradual change of colour at cues.





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